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A View of the Evidences of Chriſtianity at the Cloſe of the pretended Age of Reaſon:

IN

EIGHT SERMONS

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

AT ST. MARY'S,

IN THE YEAR MDCCCV.

AT

THE LECTURE

FOUNDED BY

THE REV. JOHN BAMPTON, M. A.

CANON OF SALISBURY.

BY EDWARD NARES, M. A.

RECTOR OF BIDDENDEN, KENT, AND LATE FELLOW OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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1805.

LOAN STACK

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Die 30 *Aug.*
1805.

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TO

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF PORTLAND,

CHANCELLOR;

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOHN LORD ELDON,

HIGH STEWARD;

TO

THE REVEREND THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

AND

HEADS OF COLLEGES

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

(By whose Appointment the following Sermons were preached;)

TO THE WORSHIPFUL

THE MAYOR

AND CORPORATION OF OXFORD,

IN TOKEN OF RESPECT AND VENERATION FOR THE CHIEF MAGISTRATES OF A CITY, WHICH HIS FATHER HAD LONG THE HONOUR OF REPRESENTING IN PARLIAMENT,

THIS VOLUME

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY AND MOST GRATEFULLY

INSCRIBED

BY THEIR OBEDIENT

AND VERY HUMBLE SERVANT,

EDWARD NARES.

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EXTRACT

FROM THE

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

OF THE LATE

REV. JOHN BAMPTON,

CANON OF SALISBURY.

——"I give and bequeath my Lands and "Eſtates to the Chancellor, Maſters, and Scholars "of the Univerſity of Oxford for ever, to have "and to hold all and ſingular the ſaid Lands or "Eſtates upon truſt, and to the intents and pur-"poſes hereinafter mentioned; that is to ſay, I "will and appoint that the Vice-Chancellor of "the Univerſity of Oxford for the time being ſhall "take and receive all the rents, iſſues, and pro-"fits thereof, and (after all taxes, reparations, and "neceſſary deductions made) that he pay all the "remainder to the endowment of eight Divinity "Lecture Sermons, to be eſtabliſhed for ever in "the ſaid Univerſity, and to be performed in the "manner following:

"I direct and appoint, that, upon the firſt "Tueſday in Eaſter Term, a Lecturer be yearly "choſen

" choſen by the Heads of Colleges only, and by
" no others, in the room adjoining to the Print-
" ing-Houſe, between the hours of ten in the
" morning and two in the afternoon, to preach
" eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, the year fol-
" lowing, at St. Mary's in Oxford, between the
" commencement of the laſt month in Lent Term,
" and the end of the third week in Act Term.

" Alſo I direct and appoint, that the eight Di-
" vinity Lecture Sermons ſhall be preached upon
" either of the following Subjects—to confirm
" and eſtabliſh the Chriſtian Faith, and to con-
" fute all heretics and ſchiſmatics—upon the di-
" vine authority of the holy Scriptures—upon
" the authority of the writings of the primitive
" Fathers, as to the faith and practice of the pri-
" mitive Church—upon the Divinity of our
" Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt—upon the Di-
" vinity of the Holy Ghoſt—upon the Articles
" of the Chriſtian Faith, as comprehended in the
" Apoſtles' and Nicene Creeds.

" Alſo I direct, that thirty copies of the eight
" Divinity Lecture Sermons ſhall be always
" printed, within two months after they are
" preached, and one copy ſhall be given to the
" Chancellor of the Univerſity, and one copy to
" the Head of every College, and one copy to the
" Mayor of the city of Oxford, and one copy to
" be put into the Bodleian Library; and the ex-

" pence

" pence of printing them ſhall be paid out of the " revenue of the Land or Eſtates given for eſta- " bliſhing the Divinity Lecture Sermons; and " the Preacher ſhall not be paid, nor be entitled " to the revenue, before they are printed.

" Alſo I direct and appoint, that no perſon " ſhall be qualified to preach the Divinity Lec- " ture Sermons, unleſs he hath taken the Degree " of Maſter of Arts at leaſt, in one of the two " Univerſities of Oxford or Cambridge; and that " the ſame perſon ſhall never preach the Divi- " nity Lecture Sermons twice."

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SERMON VII.

JUDE, ver. 10.

But theſe ſpeak evil of thoſe things which they know not. P. 355.

SERMON VIII.

PSALM cxlvii. 19, 20.

He ſheweth his word *unto Jacob, his* ſtatutes *and* ordinances *unto Iſrael.*

He hath not dealt ſo with any nation; neither have the heathen knowledge *of his* laws. P. 445.

SERMON IX.

TITUS ii. 15.

Theſe things ſpeak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man deſpiſe thee. P. 509.

ERRATA.

P. 62. l. 7. for *difference* read *indifference*
— 79. l. 8. for *have a better* read *have had a better*
— 137. l. 12 from the bottom, for *Violà* read *Voilà*
— 208. l. laſt, for *not eſſential* read *moſt eſſential*
— 220. l. 10. read *The ſecond and third ages are of more than two millions of years*;
— 374. l. 18. for *real manhood* read *mere manhood*
— 421. l. 33. for *primus* read *fuimus*

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But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.
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ACTS v. 38, 39.

And now I ſay unto you, Refrain from theſe men, and let them alone: For if this counſel or this work be of man, it will come to nought:
But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.
P. 57.

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Thus ſaith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and ſee, and aſk for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find reſt for your ſouls. But they ſaid, We will not walk therein. P. 201.

SERMON VI.

Psalm xc. 2.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made; thou art God from everlaſting, and world without end. P. 275.

SERMON

Acts v. 38, 39.

And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: For if this counsel or this work be of man, it will come to nought:
But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.

In this advice of Gamaliel there was, no doubt, much of prudence and good sense; of equity and common justice it may be allowed to have had its share; of reverence towards God it was not destitute; but of good will to the cause of Christianity we may scarcely at all suspect it (1): and yet no friend could have set Christianity in a more advantageous point of view, or have more properly put it upon the true footing of its own pretensions. It assumed to be "of God (2)," and what is more remarkable, even when every sort of opposition and hostility was to be apprehended [a], it assumed to be so secure, as to be above being overthrown not only by men, but by all the malice and stratagems of the powers of darkness (3). We are able to

[a] How much this strengthens the evidence for Christianity, see *Leslie's Works*, vol. ii. 163.

count the years that have elapſed ſince this cautious and wiſe advice was given; and though we may not pretend to fix the term that Gamaliel might have in contemplation, as to the iſſue of the experiment; yet we may, I think, be morally certain that he had no expectation that it would have maintained its ground, as it now has done, for more than eighteen centuries.

That it has continued ſo long, muſt not in itſelf be admitted as a demonſtration of its truth. It is impoſſible to ſay how long it may pleaſe God, for particular ends, to ſuffer error to prevail. That great and high purpoſes may be anſwered by its exiſtence, and continuance under certain circumſtances, only the Infidel would doubt. It ſeems certainly to ariſe out of the nature and neceſſity of things; the freedom of the human mind and human will depending on the poſſibility both of error and of vice.

The *mere duration* therefore of any religious ſyſtem cannot prove it to be "of God(4)," unleſs it ſhall ſeem to have prevailed in *oppoſition to man.* For human error may in the courſe of time become ſo wilful and inveterate, as to delay the interpoſition of the Almighty

mighty to remove it, and to diſpel the darkneſs of ſuch infatuations. The blindneſs of the Jews is exactly cotemporary with Chriſtianity itſelf. No argument is therefore even yet to be drawn, from the *mere continuance* of the Chriſtian religion.

But though error may be ſuffered to prevail, where men are headſtrong and obſtinate in reſiſting the truth, and bent upon cheriſhing and upholding their own miſtakes; yet, that any ſyſtem, *aſſuming* to be "of GOD," ſhould maintain itſelf againſt every ſort of *oppoſition* on the part of *man*, is a caſe widely different.

So many able, and I think unanſwerable, works have been written to prove Chriſtianity to be "of GOD," that the ſubject ſeems exhauſted; but ſtill many of theſe arguments muſt needs reſt on ground diſputed by the Infidel (5); on miracles which he is diſpoſed to deny (6); on teſtimony which he is determined to doubt; on the fulfilment of prophecies, the authority and application of which he is unwilling to admit. But another queſtion may eaſily preſent itſelf to the inquiſitive mind, and my text ſuggeſts it, namely, what would probably have been the fate of Chriſtianity

at this time, had it been, as Gamaliel, in all likelihood, meant to inſinuate, of *man?*

There is no doubt but that every proof which can be brought forward, to ſhew it to have been "of GOD," muſt at the ſame time tend to prove it to have been *not* of *man:* but there is ſtill this difference between the two enquiries; in the one we intend to demonſtrate its inherent ſtrength and validity; in the other, we endeavour to prove, if I may ſo ſay, its *want* of *weakneſs*, or the abſence of thoſe things which would prove it human (7).

If the Revelation we adhere to be truly "of "GOD," it is, no doubt, proper to dwell on its high pretenſions, and point out its divinity: but it is no leſs an object worthy of our conſideration, to examine into the probable chances that have occurred, of its failure, had it been "of *man*." When we advance againſt the Deiſt, the ſtupendous miracles accompanying its firſt eſtabliſhment; the unimpeachable character of the ſacred writers; the extraordinary and exact accompliſhment of the prophecies foretelling the advent of Meſſiah; it is evident that all theſe are in themſelves ſubjects of doubt and diſputation;

tion; and before they can be admitted by the Deiſt to prove the divinity of our holy Religion, they muſt themſelves be proved and demonſtrated to the ſatisfaction of the unbeliever. But in ſhewing that had it been "of "*man*," there is every poſſible reaſon to think it muſt have failed, as a mere human invention, we lay out of the queſtion all the more immediate teſtimonies of its divinity, all thoſe marks and characters which the Deiſt is diſpoſed to controvert (3), and we reſt the whole argument on ſuch demonſtration as muſt make an impreſſion on any ingenuous and diſcerning mind.

Had then Chriſtianity been "of *man*," we may naturally conclude, from what has paſſed in the world ſince its firſt introduction, that it would before this have failed, either through ſome inherent defect, or from ſome outward oppoſition. I ſay from what has paſſed in the world ſince its firſt introduction, becauſe on this will depend the whole queſtion, as ſuggeſted by the advice of Gamaliel. Had Chriſtianity been no object of notice, or ſubject of enquiry, to any but its own diſciples, it might have endured juſt as long as it has done, whether founded in error

or in truth. It would have depended on the temper and diſpoſition of thoſe only who embraced it: but records of indiſputable veracity tell us that it was from the firſt, and has been even to our days, as much an object of attention to its opponents, as to its friends and admirers. It has been in a ſtate of very critical trial and probation from its very firſt appearance; it has been aſſailed by every weapon ſuited to ſuch an attack; it has been perſecuted by the violent, derided by the Infidel, ſpurned at by the wicked, miſrepreſented by the ignorant (9).

It would be endleſs and altogether uſeleſs to enumerate the different ſtruggles it has had to make, (if we may ſo ſpeak with due reverence,) ſince its firſt appearance. Any body at all acquainted with the hiſtory of the Church will eaſily call to mind what perſecutions it has undergone, and what variety of oppoſition it has met with. It would be beyond my purpoſe to record mere facts; it would rather be my wiſh to examine into the ſpirit of theſe different attacks; to ſhew how earneſtly every oppoſing principle among mankind has been ſet on work to overthrow it; and much ſurely its triumph over ſuch multiplied aſſaults

aſſaults ſhould ſerve to ſtrengthen our confidence in its divine authority.

Had it been "of *man*," it muſt be admitted man might have overthrown it[b]: if man therefore has always been in ſome way or other in oppoſition to it, what power but that of God could have upheld it? I ſhall here however beg leave to connect Chriſtianity with the Revelation to the Jewiſh nation, which preceded it. I ſhall beg leave to conſider the *Old* and *New* Teſtaments as *inſeparable*.

The oppoſition to theſe Revelations has been conſtant ſince the diſobedience of our firſt parents; but previous to Chriſtianity it conſiſted much in outward acts of violence, or idolatrous practices, and did not appear ſo much in the ſhape of objections to the revealed principles and doctrines, as in the adoption of contrary and erroneous ſyſtems of Religion.

The various oppoſitions we have to examine have both theſe characters; having appeared either in the ſhape of contradiction or competition; either in the form of objec-

[b] "Tout ce qu'ont fait les hommes, les hommes peuvent le "détruire." *Rouſſeau, Emile.*

tions to the truths revealed, or as ſyſtems of a rival tendency. Before Chriſtianity, other religions and other ſyſtems were embraced as diſtinct matters; when they came into competition with the true Religion, the latter was treated with open contempt; its merits and foundations were ſcarce at all, if ever, canvaſſed; and therefore God's truth, when vindication became neceſſary, was to be vindicated only by manifeſt and ſenſible interpoſition; open and conſpicuous vengeance on his enemies and blaſphemers (10). But ſince Chriſtianity, Revelation has not only not been oppoſed, but has ſcarcely been ſo much as ſlighted or neglected, without ſome pretended excuſe, inſinuating either a want of authority, or ſome other great defect on the part of Revelation.

As the mode of attack has been altered, ſo of courſe has the mode of defence. God no longer viſibly interpoſes, but having ſupplied Chriſtians with the weapons proper for reſiſting all attacks on the part of man, he has abandoned it to our care and protection, with a full aſſurance that it ſhall not fail. While time can make no change in the Revelation committed to our charge, it

is

is operating every poſſible change in the conſtitution of human affairs: multiplied experiments and accumulated ſtores of wiſdom have greatly improved the condition of the human mind; impoſture has every day leſs chance of making its way, while truth may at leaſt have the advantage of a more ſatisfactory examination.

Revelation therefore, as it becomes every day more expoſed, ſhould obtain the greater credence, if it continues proof againſt ſuch aſſaults: and it muſt be remarked, that Infidels themſelves give ground and ſupport to this triumph of Revelation, becauſe in rejecting it as an object of ſuperſtition only, and vain fancies, they pretend to have made ſuch advances in knowledge, as to ſee things more clearly, and to fathom them more deeply, than their predeceſſors. The advancement of human knowledge is aſſigned as the principal reaſon for rejecting ſuch *errors*. A hope is alſo held out to us of ſtill further improvement. But it will ſurely admit of a queſtion, whether ſuch improvement is wanting in particular points; or whether we have not ample reaſon to be ſatisfied with what has been already diſcovered; the very poſſibility of improvement depending on a thorough

thorough apprehenſion and acknowledgment of ſome defect. But this may be diſcuſſed hereafter; at preſent let it be ſufficient to admit to the fulleſt extent the great advancement of human knowledge, as that muſt certainly heighten the critical ſituation of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Revelations, if after all they are but human inventions.

Chriſtianity was not confined to "*a corner*" at its birth, nor is it diſpoſed to take refuge in a corner now. It ſtands expoſed to view, and to every aſſault on the part of the Infidel; and the Infidel has indeed more vantage ground than he had; for, if not entirely through the ſuperior learning of the preſent age, yet through the great accumulation of learning tranſmitted to us, through ages paſt, as well as through the overthrow of almoſt all pagan ſuperſtitions, and irrational prejudices, he has every means of detecting its weak parts, or of inventing ſome ſyſtem in oppoſition to it [c].

Whatever weapon could be raiſed againſt impoſition is at the Infidel's command. There is learning enough in the world to detect errors, and wit enough to fabricate other

[c] See Sherlock's IXth Diſcourſe, pp. 264, 265.

ſyſtems,

ſyſtems, and better, if this be really defective. There *is*, and *has been*; for indeed no mode of aſſault, I believe, remains untried: the heavy artillery of learning and criticiſm, as well as the lighter weapons of wit and ridicule have been repeatedly brought into the field. The effects they have had in each aſſault it is not my object to enquire. It is certain *they have not prevailed.* Revelation maintains its ground, not upheld by partial, prejudiced, or intereſted adherents, but ready to anſwer to every charge of error or inconſiſtency, and prepared to undergo any compariſon with rival ſyſtems.

Nor is this ſaid without reaſon: for though we would grant that Infidels have every advantage that the accumulated learning, and multiplied enquiries, of a long lapſe of ages can give them, whereby they muſt needs be admirably qualified both to raiſe objections, and to dreſs up any new ſyſtems; yet the benefits of ſuch accumulated learning and curious enquiries being equally open to believers, believers are at leaſt as well qualified to judge of the objections and ſyſtems of their opponents, as ſuch opponents can be to judge of the grounds of *their* faith.

Nor

Nor is theology a ſcience of ſo confined a nature, as that the Infidel may expect to attack Revelation with any weapon which the profeſſed Theologian is unable to wield in its defence. Perhaps of all ſciences none can afford topics for argument againſt Revelation, but the following: HISTORY, CRITICISM, ETHICS, PHYSICS, and METAPHYSICS; and there is not one of theſe, if we except *Phyſics*, of which the profeſſed Theologian muſt not be a competent maſter. Of *Hiſtory* he ought to know all that can in any way corroborate or confirm the hiſtorical records of the holy Scriptures; for a contradiction in facts and events would greatly invalidate its authority. In *Criticiſm* he ſhould be well ſkilled: a falſe interpretation of the original writings, in which the word of God is conveyed down to us, being either a ſnare or a ſupport to the unbeliever. Of *Ethics* he ought to know much, in order to be competent to judge of the internal evidence of a religion aſſuming to come from a God of infinite purity and perfection. And the ſame may be ſaid of *Metaphyſics*, which muſt ſerve to throw much light on the information there given us of ſpiritual beings and ſpiritual

ritual agency. *Phyſics*, though no indiſpenſable object of ſtudy to the Theologian, muſt yet be too intereſting in general to be entirely omitted: but as arguments of a peculiar nature have been drawn from this branch of ſcience, more will be to be ſaid upon it hereafter. We muſt however note here, that the Infidel can make no progreſs in this ſcience, which is not attainable by the Theologian (''); and therefore, that the latter may be able to follow him whereſoever his objections may lead.

And perhaps in this inſtance the times are much altered: in former days, when, within the pale of the Church, controverſies were carried on with all the parade and intricate formalities of the moſt ſubtle logic, it was the occupation of a man's whole life, to ſtudy the uſe of thoſe cumberſome weapons [d]: beſides that general knowledge at the ſame time was diſregarded and even diſcountenanced, and they had other means of ſilencing all direct oppoſition to the holy Scriptures than thoſe of argument and reply. But at preſent the Infidel may be ſure of being met fairly

[d] "In illis temporibus ingenioſa res fuit eſſe Chriſtianum." *Eraſmus.*

in

in the field, and oppoſed with whatever weapons he may chooſe for conducting the attack. Believers are no longer to be deſpiſed as bigots; as prejudiced and partial advocates. There are numbers to be found capable of coping with the moſt ſubtle and the moſt acute on the ſide of infidelity; capable of examining as minutely and as largely into the merits of every point advanced againſt Revelation, as thoſe on the other ſide can pretend to, in inveſtigating the merits of the doctrines they oppoſe.

The ſupporters of Revelation deſire nothing *more*, than fair enquiry, and diffuſive argument. They wiſh Revelation to be examined in all its points and bearings ([12]); and let it be conſidered, that there are ſome points, in which if Revelation ſhould be found deficient, it muſt be given up. If any hiſtory, or hiſtorical relics [e], of *unqueſtionable authenticity*, ſhould be found to contradict its records [f]: if nature, or natural effects and phænomena, ſhould be found in poſitive oppoſition to the word of Scripture: if a

[e] See Minute Philoſopher, p. 287. Dial. vi.

[f] Divine Legation of Moſes, B. iv. §. 5.

falſe

falſe interpretation of the original writings ſhould have been impoſed upon the world as truth: if the moral precepts could be proved to be inconſiſtent with the undoubted attributes of God; or the notions of the Deity we find therein, abſurd and irrational; then I know not how Revelation could be ſupported. It would be impoſſible not to acknowledge it to be "of *man*."

But if, on the contrary, it ſhould be found, that Revelation, taking its origin from the moſt remote periods, including in it much of hiſtorical fact, ſhall not, in regard to thoſe facts, have been contradicted by *any* after-diſcovery, of *more* or *equally* authentic records: if the wide circle of the whole globe, not ſo much as the half of which was known, or had been traverſed, when the ſacred Books were written, has ſupplied no one undoubted hiſtorical teſtimony againſt them ([13]): if Revelation, tranſmitted to us in a ſeries of compoſitions of ſuch a date as to be entirely prior to all thoſe obſervations and experiments, which have laid open to us ſo many wonders in the natural world, ſhall be found to have conformed itſelf to the true ſyſtem of nature, as far as common lan-

language would allow, and in no inſtance to have ſpoken in direct contradiction to the operations of nature: if the door has been ſtudiouſly ſet open by the advocates of Revelation, for a cloſe and critical examination of Holy Writ in its original languages, and no falſe interpretation is inſiſted upon: if all its moral precepts ſhall be found not only conformable to the pureſt dictates of reaſon and conſcience, but to be ſo ſelect in their nature, ſo clear in their enunciation, ſo practicable in their directions, ſo forcible in regard to their ſanctions, that no human wiſdom ever attained to ſuch a ſyſtem in any other inſtance: if its notions and repreſentations of the Deity, and the world of ſpirits, the operations and nature of the human ſoul, ſhall be found either conſonant, or far ſuperior to all that has been diſcovered under the ſyſtem of natural religion; then ſurely the iſſue of the enquiry *muſt be*, that ſuch a ſcheme of Religion, ſuch a connected chain of facts (14), ſuch a ſyſtem of precepts, muſt be "of GOD," and of GOD ONLY!

Now, undoubtedly, much of this has been already amply proved and demonſtrated. The queſtion however will from day to day become

become more intereſting, becauſe, as it is the office and effect of *time* in general to overthrow all falſe opinions and unreaſonable prejudices, ſo muſt it ſerve to confirm and eſtabliſh truth.

In the lapſe of ages there will be different periods, no doubt, more friendly than others to the developement of truth, as well as periods more favourable to the prevalence of error and prejudice. During ſome ages, the human mind may be ſupine, indolent, and placed in adverſe circumſtances as to its expanſion and its energies. At others, more favourable occaſions will occur, in which it ſhall be in the way of every advantage conducive to the advancement of knowledge, and the conſequent diſcovery of the moſt important truths. Such periods we may well trace in the revival of learning in Europe, and the glorious reformation of the Church.

We have recently paſſed a period of no ſmall importance, though of a very queſtionable character. It has been oſtentatiouſly indeed denominated the *Age* of Reason. I do not mean to allude only to the work of a ſimple individual, diſtinguiſhed by this title; but allowing him the credit of having ad-

opted a term admirably expreſſive not only of his own deſigns, but of that of many others who have made themſelves conſpicuous in the period I am alluding to, I propoſe to adopt it as a general title for that æra, in which Reaſon has been peculiarly oppoſed to Revelation ([15]), and, I think I may ſay, actual experiment made of its ſtrength and its effects[g].

A queſtion naturally ariſes, How has Chriſtianity paſſed through this period? Has Reaſon in *this* conflict got the better? Has ſhe recommended herſelf ſo as to be henceforth ſolely relied on, to the excluſion of all pretended Revelations? Has ſhe, in delivering man from the *rubbiſh* of *ancient prejudices* and *ſuperſtitions*, ſet him upon a ſure footing; fortified his ſoul againſt every terror; cleared it of every doubt and perplexity; and given it either the enjoyment or certain hope of eaſe and happineſs? Has ſhe eſtabliſhed a clear and *indiſputable* rule of right, whereby a man may not only regulate his actions with prudence and decorum, but become a

[g] See, as to the probable reſult, Profeſſor Brown's Appendix to *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, 1798.

kind

kind and good neighbour to all around him? Has Reaſon, in this her *firſt* appearance upon earth, (for ſo the aſſumed title would inſinuate,) ſhewn herſelf ſuperior to thoſe *falſe* apparitions of her that *deceived* the world in *ancient* times? Has ſhe done ſo much for us in this her own peculiar age, as to enable us not only to diſcard Revelation with contempt, but to ſee the emptineſs of thoſe vain pretenders of former days, who, aſſuming her name, ſought to enlighten the world in the ſame bold manner, and to releaſe it from the bondage of error and darkneſs?

If ſhe ſhall be found to have done *this* for the world, let it *be* HER age! If ſhe has appeared *ſuperior to Chriſtianity*, more divine, more encouraging, more ſalutary in her doctrines and precepts, let us not live any longer in error, let us hail her as ſhe deſerves: let us fall proſtrate at her feet, as a meſſenger of *better tidings* than the *Goſpel* of Chriſt has proclaimed muſt needs demand every teſtimony of regard and gratitude! ([16])

We have, I conceive, no need to enquire, whether the author, from whom we more particularly derive the title of the *Age* of

Reaſon, was ſincere in calling it ſo, with reference to other diſcoveries beſides his own: it is enough to be certain that *he at leaſt* apprehended, from the general complexion of things, that ſuch a happy period was juſt then arrived; and if we examine into the circumſtances of thoſe particular times, we cannot fail to be ſatisfied, that a correſpondent ſpirit prevailed throughout the whole continent of Europe (17).

Reaſon had at that time certainly a large confederacy of choſen troops, all bent upon the ſame object, all building on the ſame hopes, all equally confident of ſucceſs againſt their devoted opponents, the advocates for Revelation, the friends of ſocial order and regular government. All ancient opinions were declared to be prejudices, and a war of extermination denounced againſt them. Reaſon could expect no period of greater advantage for the trial of her ſtrength, and advancement of her cauſe. It matters little whether the moſt has been made of theſe advantages; *it is enough to know that ſhe has ſuppoſed herſelf ſtrong enough to combat ancient prejudices with effect;* that ſhe has at leaſt been ſenſible of her own command over

ſuch

ſuch weapons as *ſhe thought* to be *ſufficient* for the overthrow of the ſtrong holds ſhe meant to carry by aſſault. If it ſhall turn out that ſhe has uſed theſe weapons amiſs, or thought herſelf ſtrong when in fact ſhe was weak, it will not alter the caſe; we may yet be able to judge of thoſe arguments, which have *appeared* to *her* to give her the victory ([18]). She muſt be left to be her own judge as to their ſufficiency, when ſhe *claims* the victory; it is ours to judge whether ſhe has deceived herſelf or not.

Formerly Reaſon might ſeem to have had a hard taſk to vindicate her own ſupremacy in matters of judgment, for ſhe was too raſhly refuſed *all ſort* of *interference:* but of late ſhe has been invited to interfere ([19]); ſhe has been reſpectfully appealed to; ſhe has had every right and pretenſion, to which ſhe could fairly lay claim, adjudged to her ([20].) If ſhe would preſume beyond her fair and reaſonable claims, her right to judge muſt needs be queſtioned and examined. To ſubmit to human reaſon without juſt grounds, to appeal to her where ſhe can have no pretenſions to paſs a judgment, would neceſſarily be to ſubmit, and to ap-

peal, *without* Reaſon. It would be ſubmitting, and appealing, and rebelling againſt her decrees at the ſame time.

And ſurely Reaſon *muſt* acknowledge *ſome* things to be ſo above comprehenſion, as to be paſt her judgment. To make her the ſole judge in ſuch matters, would therefore be to act in contradiction to her own ſenſe of right and authority. It muſt always, therefore, be the part of a wiſe man, to be cautious how far he ſubmits himſelf to thoſe who pretend to inſtruct him in the judgments and *deciſions* of human Reaſon; for many may exceed their commiſſion.

What human Reaſon may *approve*, and *aſſent to*, it muſt always be of importance to us to know; but it *cannot be*, that no truths can exiſt independent of human Reaſon. Unleſs we believe in the wild notion of the eternity of the world, and all things in it, we *muſt* ſuppoſe, that before there was any ſuch faculty as human Reaſon, many things muſt have been brought into exiſtence; many things even peculiarly adapted to the uſe of man, and which, therefore, we might well ſuppoſe, if any neceſſity could exiſt for the *conſent* of human Reaſon, would

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at leaſt have been rendered plain and intelligible to the underſtanding of man. But is this ſo? Does the ſun ſhine by our conſent, or ſpread abroad his rays in a way familiar and evident to our apprehenſion? Is man's *own body* exactly what he would wiſh and deſire? Would he not have contrived ſo as to have had it laſt longer than it uſually does, and free from all thoſe ills and infirmities, to which it is now liable? Would he not have reſerved to himſelf a right to *inſpect thoſe nice and delicate organs of life and motion*, on which his very exiſtence ſeems ſo much to depend, inſtead of *ſhutting them entirely out* from his *own* obſervation and management; as is now evidently the caſe with regard to the human frame?

This is not ſaid with a view to depreciate Reaſon: it is a high and moſt diſtinguiſhing faculty; but yet it would certainly appear, that how much ſoever we may be to depend on it as a directing faculty, it was not beſtowed upon us in any *unlimited* degree. Man was *meant to be left in ignorance* (21), as to many points; of which there cannot, I think, be a ſtronger proof, than in the very inſtance I have adduced, the *peculiar con-*

trivance of the human frame; the *internal* parts eſpecially; which, till anatomical obſervations had multiplied greatly, muſt have been wholly unknown to us, though all our vital functions depended on thoſe *concealed* organs: and after all, we can only reaſon from analogy; the *internal* conſtitution of a *living* being none can examine into.

Many other inſtances might certainly be brought forward, to ſhew that, in certain caſes, man's Reaſon, however it might be left free to ſpeculate upon ſuch matters, was not originally *meant to be made the judge,* or even *permitted* to *interfere.* Man is fairly *ſhut out* from his own obſervations in regard to the moſt eſſential functions of his bodily frame: if he has a greater natural inſight into his ſpiritual condition, it is repugnant to analogy; and the hiſtory of the world affords no proof of ſuch a thing.

So far from man being better acquainted with the modes, circumſtances, and condition of his future life, he cannot know naturally whether his ſoul is to ſurvive the decay and diſſolution of his preſent bodily organs. Can it admit of a queſtion, whether Reaſon was ſuperadded to the other faculties man has

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in common with brutes, in order to inform him of his ſuperior and peculiar deſtination? Certainly man cannot know more of what is to become of him hereafter, by any application of his Reaſon, than the brute that we ſuppoſe will periſh, *as to the actual certainty of the matter* ([22]): Reaſon may ſupport conjecture ſo far as to raiſe in man the utmoſt expectation of a future life [h], and therefore, one would think, ſhould induce him to expect alſo, that he ſhould be ſupernaturally informed of it, and ſupernaturally inſtructed in the terms and conditions leading thereto. And this is enough for man. The moment Reaſon has carried him far enough to induce him to conjecture that he has an intereſt in a future ſtate, in a world diſtinct from this, he may naturally expect ſome mode of intercourſe will be kept open.

Reaſon ſeems to be the ſame in man with that *capacity* of *improvement* pointed out by a celebrated writer [i], as the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of our claſs of being. But a capacity of improvement in man, *as man*, muſt

[h] See Butler's Analogy, chap. i.

[i] *Rouſſeau.* See his tract on the Origin of the Inequality of Man.

needs

needs be limited; *man* could never attain to the perfections of an *angel* in *this* ſtage of his being. All beyond what his ſenſes inform him of, or Revelation expreſsly diſcloſes to him, can amount to no more than conjecture.

I would not *depreciate* Reaſon, as the writer juſt alluded to ſeems to have done; I cannot regard it as a faculty "only of uſe to "exalt the individual at the expence of the "ſpecies;" I conſider it as a *noble*, a *glorious* faculty; capable of leading us to ſuch a knowledge and judgment of the things around us, as both to amend our condition here, and fit us to anticipate the enlargement of our faculties in a ſuperior ſtate of being. No faculty could be more ſuited to give us the conſoling hope of a progreſſive ſtate of improvement hereafter, being certainly competent to raiſe our notions at leaſt above this ſublunary ſtate, though incapable at preſent of actually penetrating, of itſelf, the veil that conceals from us the regions above. Reaſon has its origin as it were in heaven, being fitted already probably for the full fruition of it, when ſupplied with ſenſes ſuitable; or rather when ſo entirely ſpiritualiſed as to comprehend

comprehend by intuition, what it can now only behold, as *through a glaſs darkly* (23).

The limits, within which human Reaſon is at preſent confined, are ſurely capable of being clearly aſcertained. And I ſhould not be very unwilling to allow, that ſo far we might conceive the age of Reaſon to *be* arrived, that indeed Reaſon has now every aid at command, that it could deſire or expect. Except the barrier obviouſly interpoſed between this world and the next, it is able to cope with almoſt every difficulty in the inveſtigation of truth. I cannot conceive that much in the line of *Hiſtory* remains to be diſcovered. I cannot conceive that *Criticiſm* can be carried further than it has been. I do not think *Metaphyſics* is likely to be applied with greater effect than it has been, to the curious, but too often unſatisfactory, objects of its enquiry. *Ethics* can ſcarce be better underſtood than they already are in theory, however in practice men fail of acting up to the ſtandard they ſhould govern themſelves by. And even in *Phyſics*, I apprehend, ſo far from advancing nearer to the truth of matters by further experiments, we run a chance only of convincing ourſelves more and more of our own

own ignorance, it being impoſſible to know any thing determinate of many *paſt* tranſactions.

But if Reaſon be natural, and not altogether an *acquiſition*, as one writer of this age of Reaſon would maintain[k]; it yet ſhould, in the preſent ſtate of the world, when it ſets up for a judge, be aſſiſted by all the acquired knowledge poſſible. Reaſon has no right to act peremptorily of herſelf, in oppoſition to Revelation, without being competent to examine and to judge of every pretenſion Revelation hath to urge. It is indeed difficult now to ſay how it would be *poſſible* for Reaſon to act of herſelf, and wholly unaſſiſted. Every book that is written is the judgment of ſome man's Reaſon on ſome given point: none therefore but a *perfectly illiterate* perſon can be expected to argue upon the mere principle of his *own unaſſiſted* Reaſon. When ſuch ſtores of wiſdom are accumulated, as is now the caſe, the *age* of Reason cannot be an age when Reaſon is to act without regard to theſe intellectual treaſures (24); but when Reaſon ſhall be ſo far enlightened as to be

[k] See *Rouſſeau's Letter to the Archbiſhop of Paris. Miſcell.* vol. iii.

competent

competent to judge of every thing that has been added by man in the way of invention or diſcovery; when Reaſon ſhall be ſo informed, as to be in many inſtances incapable of being deceived; when it neither can be blinded by art, nor is any longer ſilenced by perſecution; when it is both *able* to judge, and *may* do ſo: but above all, when it knows its own powers, and graſps at nothing beyond its reach.

NOTES

NOTES TO SERMON I.

Page 1. *note* (1).

"NON certe quod Evangelio faveret, ſed quod "homo eſſet moderatus." *Beza.* Dr. Doddridge however juſtly obſerves, Gamaliel could not be very moderate, if he was the author of the prayer againſt the Chriſtians, uſed in the Jewiſh ſynagogues, as is reported of him. Gamaliel, beſides all other prejudices, might, from particular circumſtances, have been influenced againſt Chriſtianity by a family pride and jealouſy: ſee *Jenkins's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*, vol. ii. 503. The edict of Antoninus in favour of the Chriſtians, addreſſed to the ſtates of Aſia, has much the ſame ſentiment, recommending moderation, and caſting the care and defence of idolatry on the *Gods* themſelves; intimating alſo, that the Chriſtians would never be driven by force to forſake the worſhip of the *eternal God*, in whom they truſted. Vid. *Juſtin Martyr. Apol. ad Ant.*

Page 1. *note* (2).

It aſſumed to be "of GOD."] That it aſſumed to be *from Heaven*, is another thing. This is the pretence of *all* religions: but of *Chriſtianity* it may be ſaid, that it aſſumes to be a Revelation from that *very God* whom the *Deiſt* is willing to acknowledge, a God too pure and too good to ſuffer us to be deceived *in his name.* See *Jenkins's Reaſonableneſs*, &c. part iv. chap. 2.

Page 1. *note* (3).

"Fundamenti loco ponatur perire non poſſe fundi-"tus Eccleſiam Chriſtianam, nunquam extinctam iri in "terris. Nunquam reviviſcet et dominabitur *Paganiſ-*"*mus* aut *Judaiſmus*; nunquam prævalebit Lex Moho-"metis, aut alia quæcunque, per totum terrarum orbem,

bem, *extincto Evangelio*, et *Religionis Chriſtianæ profeſſione*. Hoc certum ratumque ex verbis Chriſti. Sed qui promiſit ſe conſervaturum incorruptam; incorruptam dico aut doctrina aut moribus; quinimo nos monent eadem oracula ſacra futurorum ſcandalorum, Apoſtaſiæ futuræ, Antichriſti futuri." *Burnet de Fide et Officiis Chriſtianorum*, c. ix.

Page 2. *note* (4).

The mere duration *of any ſyſtem cannot prove it to be* " *of* GOD."] See *White's* ſecond *Bampton Lecture*. "Religionis autoritas non eſt *tempore* æſtimanda, ſed *Numine*, nec colere *qua die*, ſed *quid* cœperis, convenit "intueri." *Arnobius contr. Gentes*.—It is well known that the *Pagans* pleaded preſcription in favour of *their* tenets againſt the Chriſtians; the *Catholics* againſt the firſt Reformers, &c. ſee *Bayle ſur les Cometes*. Biſhop Law, in his diſcourſes on the *Theory of Religion*, concludes that both *Popery* and *Mahometaniſm* will be found to have accompliſhed ſome wiſe and good ends.

Page 3. *note* (5).

Many of theſe arguments muſt needs reſt on ground diſputed by the Infidel.] " Omittamus ſane teſtimonia *Prophetarum*," ſays Lactantius, lib. i. c. 5. " ne minus "idonea probatio videatur ab *his*, quibus *omnino non creditur*;" and he blames Cyprian for having done the contrary, lib. v. c. 4. Cyril of Jeruſalem (*Catecheſ.* xviii.) adviſes the not arguing out of the Scriptures againſt thoſe who do not acknowledge them. " Τοῖς μὲν οὖν κέχρησο λόγοις πρὸς Ἕλληνας· τοῖς γὰρ τὰ ἔγγραφα μὴ παραδεχομένοις, ἀγράφοις μάχου τοῖς ὅπλοις ἐκ λογισμῶν μόνον καὶ ἀποδείξεων." Mr. Gibbon wiſhes the apologiſts had been diſcreet enough to have acted exactly as Lactantius profeſſes to do, and as Cyril recommends in the paſſages cited. Not that we would grant to Mr. Gibbon, that the evidence from *prophecy* ought to be kept out of ſight, in arguing with Deiſts and Infidels. A *prophecy*, the preciſe date of which is aſcertainable, and the accompliſhment *certain* and *circumſtantial*, affords an appeal applicable to every mind.

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Page 3. *note* (6).

On miracles which he is diſpoſed to deny.] Rouſſeau in his Letters from the Mountains, written in defence of his *Emile*, aſſerts, that not only miracles are no adequate proof in themſelves of a divine miſſion, it being impoſſible, from our imperfect knowledge of nature, and from the ſurpriſing deceptions of magic and artifice, to know what are truly miracles; but that our Saviour *never inſiſted upon his own miracles as any proof of his miſſion*. But we may ſafely aſſure ourſelves, that St. John thought otherwiſe; ſee chap. xv. 24; and that Grotius ſo underſtood him, whoſe comment upon the words Εἰ τὰ ἔργα μὴ ἐποιήσα, is as follows; that *beſides* the doctrine which he preached, (and which Rouſſeau would have to be the *only* adequate proof of his miſſion,) "*Alterum* adfert "argumentum, quo adverſarii reddantur inexcuſabiles: "MIRACULA SUA!" See alſo John x. 37, 38. xiv. 11. Matth. xi. 4, 5. Luke vii. 22. and *Biſhop Gibſon's Firſt Paſtoral Letter*, pp. 37, 38. *Enchirid. Theolog.* The author of *Chriſtianity not founded on Argument* aſſerts alſo, that our Lord could have no ſuch meaning as to convince by his miraculous works; no ſuch intention as to prove his own truth and *character* by theſe inſtances of his power; in *full contradiction*, ſays Biſhop Law, in his *Theory of Religion*, to thoſe *many* paſſages, where he *expreſsly appeals* to his *works*, as *direct proofs* of his commiſſion. Dr. Morgan, in his *Moral Philoſopher*, pretended alſo that Chriſt made no appeal to his miracles. See *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, Letter X. As to Rouſſeau's pretence, that miracles muſt be inadequate proofs, from the imperfection of our knowledge of natural cauſes and effects, Mr. Leſlie had long ago replied to this objection in his admirable *Method with the Jews*; where he ſhews, that though we may not always know when we are cheated, yet we can certainly tell, in many caſes, when we are *not* cheated; as in the caſe of the three Jews caſt into Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace. For "though we can-"not tell all the whole nature of fire, yet this we cer-"tainly muſt know, that it is of the nature of fire to "burn." And this is applicable, as he further ſhews, to many, if not to all, the miracles of the Scriptures.

Rouſſeau will not admit that he *denies* the miracles related in the New Teſtament; but that he ſhould have been *better ſatisfied*, if, inſtead of a lame perſon being enabled to walk, one had been made to walk that had no legs; or, inſtead of a paralytic being made to move his arm, a man with but one arm ſhould ſuddenly have had two. But ſurely the miracle of the *loaves* and *fiſhes* was of this kind, and this very miracle Rouſſeau mentions with becoming reſpect. I ſhall have more to ſay on the ſubject of miracles elſewhere.

Page 4. *note* (7).

There is alſo this difference between the two enquiries: to prove Chriſtianity to be "of GOD," we muſt be in a great degree confined to the immediate teſtimonies cotemporary with its firſt promulgation, or depending thereon: but to prove it *not to be* "*of man*," we may refer to every thing relating thereto in the *hiſtory of the world*, from its firſt creation to the preſent time.

Page 5. *note* (8).

We lay out of the queſtion all thoſe marks and characters which the Deiſt is diſpoſed to controvert.] This is the admirable plan of Biſhop Butler, as he explains it himſelf. "I have argued," he ſays, "upon the princi-"ples of others, not my own;" meaning hereby, not the proving any thing *from* their principles, but *notwithſtanding* them: "and therefore," he adds, "I have "omitted what I think true, and of the utmoſt import-"ance, becauſe by *others* thought unintelligible, and "not true." *Analogy*, Part II. ch. viii. 418. and note.

Page 6. *note* (9).

Of the many unfair and unreaſonable attacks Chriſtianity has had to encounter, ſee an account in *Archdeacon Paley's Principles of moral and political Philoſophy*, Book V. chap. ix.

"It is a convincing argument for the truth of the "Chriſtian Religion, and that it ſtands upon a moſt ſure "baſis, that none have ever yet been able to prove it "falſe, though there have been many men of all ſorts, "many fine wits, and men of great learning, that have "ſpent themſelves and ranſacked the world for argu-

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" ment againſt it, and this for many ages." *Preſident Edwards's Miſcell. Obſervations.*

Lord Shafteſbury is very unwilling to admit that we have a fair account of ſome of the early opponents of Chriſtianity, *Miſc.* v. c. 3. See however what is ſaid of Origen in *Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*, vol. ii. 522. and the whole of that chapter, where he ſhews that the arguments of the opponents of Chriſtianity were generally all anſwered before their works were loſt. It has been ſaid alſo, that the Chriſtians deſtroyed many works of their opponents; yet many certainly remain, and *were preſerved by Chriſtians*, as *Maximus Tyrius*, *Marcus Antoninus Philoſophus*, *Celſus*, *Plotinus*, *Porphyry*, *Philoſtratus*, *Julian*, *Libanius*, *Hierocles*, *Jamblichus*, *Eunapius*, and *Proclus*. See *Bryant's Authenticity of the Scriptures*. Porphyry's work, it is true, was ordered to be burnt; yet copies remained for both Apollinaris and Jerome to examine ſome time after the edict for its deſtruction. If however ſome works of the opponents of Chriſtianity have periſhed, ſo have ſome of the apologetical writings of the Chriſtians; as thoſe of *Ariſtides* and *Quadratus*, *Apollinaris* and *Melito of Sardis*, &c. A great loſs the Church ſuſtained alſo in the Commentaries of *Hegeſippus*.

Beſides the attacks that have been made on it, Chriſtianity has had much to encounter from the extravagant additions and incumbrances, with which it has been loaded at different periods, and for which it has very unjuſtly been rendered reſponſible. Nothing perhaps in modern times has been more hurtful to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, than the corruptions of the *Church of Rome*. Theſe have enabled Infidels to ſpeak of it in terms which were almoſt juſtifiable, becauſe they were oppoſing *thoſe*, who *inſiſted upon it*, that there could be *no Chriſtianity* without all thoſe abſurd and very corrupt additions which they had annexed to it. Theſe were called Chriſtianity, excluſively almoſt of the New Teſtament, and therefore no wonder they were received as ſuch, and treated as ſuch, by the profeſſed enemies of Chriſtianity in general. " I do not," ſays Dr. Beattie in his *Evidences of the Chriſtian Religion*, " think my- " ſelf concerned to anſwer any objection of thoſe writ- " ers, who miſtake the corruptions of Chriſtianity, for

" Chriſtianity itſelf;" in which he was certainly right: and this would well apply to moſt of the modern Deiſts, eſpecially *French* and *German*, who continually conſider *Popery* to be the *only* ſyſtem of Chriſtianity; or pretend to do ſo; for that many, who have declaimed moſt loudly againſt Papal Chriſtianity of late years, have known how to diſtinguiſh, upon occaſion, between genuine and corrupted Chriſtianity, ſee *Mirabeau's Speeches*, vol. ii. p. 269—274. and *Biſhop Horſley's Charge to the Clergy of Rocheſter*, at his ſecond Viſitation, 1800. It is remarkable that Juſtin Martyr and Origen continually complain, in their writings, of the true Chriſtians being confounded, by their adverſaries, with the ſectariſts and heretics who *aſſumed the title* of Chriſtians. Mr. Fuller, in his *Goſpel its own Witneſs*, obſerves, that Mr. Paine was obliged to have recourſe to " *corrupted* " *Chriſtianity*," to furniſh him with arguments againſt Revelation, *Introduct.* p. 8; and he admirably proves his point. Another evil has ariſen alſo out of the corruptions of the Church of Rome, viz. that many of the replies made to Freethinkers on the continent, being by the hands of Papiſts, have rather done injury than ſervice to the cauſe. This may be ſeen in the *Abbé Nonnette's Erreurs de Voltaire*, in which certainly the latter is often admirably expoſed, but at the ſame time ſome of the moſt exceptionable tenets of the Catholics ſtrenuouſly defended, and ſome very public characters groſsly miſrepreſented, as any Engliſhman would diſcover, who would take the pains to examine his account of Henry VIII. Ann Boleyne, Cranmer, and the Queens Mary and Elizabeth. Many of our own Proteſtant writers, on the other hand, during the latter part of the 17th century, went ſo far in their writings to prove their *ſeceſſion from* the *Roman tenets*, as to afford arguments for the Freethinkers; and the *Puritans* of England occaſioned the ſame miſchief. See *Chriſtianity as old as the Creation*; where every argument is ſupported by paſſages (detached and *unconnected* paſſages indeed!) from *ſome of our ableſt and beſt Divines*. Conſult alſo the laſt chapter of *Warburton on Grace*.

As it is of importance to clear our own faith from the imputations thrown on Chriſtianity in conſequence of the corruptions of other Churches, I ſhall add

add to this long note, that moſt certainly much of what is advanced by the moſt celebrated Freethinkers of the continent, and of modern times, as Voltaire, Rouſſeau, Helvetius, &c. is *in no manner* applicable to *our* Church and *our* tenets. Though *we* ſay, there is but one true religion, we do *not* ſay, "Que "tout homme ſoit obligé de la ſuivre ſous peine de "damnation." If this implies an acknowledgment of all its doctrines without *conviction*; we ſay, *whoever is ſaved*, will be ſaved through Jeſus Chriſt, be he Jew, Turk, Infidel, or Heretic, and according to the terms of the Goſpel in ſome way or other; which are not therefore to be ſlighted or derided, but gratefully received and embraced, when competently propoſed: and we affirm, that they may be competently propoſed, without putting the "artiſan qui ne vit que de ſon tra-"vail; le laboureur qui ne ſait pas lire; la jeune fille "délicate et timide; l'infirme qui peut à-peine ſortir "de ſon lit," to the trouble M. Rouſſeau ſtates, of deep ſtudy, profound meditation, abſtruſe diſcuſſion, and long journeys. See *Emile*, vol. iii. Thoſe who *do not*, or *cannot* receive *the light* of Chriſt's Goſpel, will always be diſtinguiſhed from thoſe who wilfully reject it.

Page 7. *line* 3, &c.

"Quicquid fictum et commentitium, quia nulla ra-"tione ſubmixum eſt, facile diſſolvitur." *Lactantius de Ira Dei*, §. 11.

"A rigid examination is the only teſt of truth. For "experience hath taught us, that even obſtinacy and "error can endure the fires of perſecution. But it is "genuine truth, and that alone, which comes out pure "and unchanged from the *ſeverer tortures* of *debate*." *Brown on the Characteriſtics.*

"Error contains in it the principles of its own mor-"tality." *Godwin, Pol. Juſtice*, B. I. c. v.

"Il n'y a que la vérité qui dure avec le temps." *Bailly.* It was a ſaying of Voltaire's, "I am weary "of hearing people repeat, that *twelve* men were ſuffi-"cient to eſtabliſh Chriſtianity: I will prove, that *one* "man is able to overthrow it." *Vie de Voltaire par Condorcet.* He forgot that, as Gamaliel ſays, "haply he "might be found to fight againſt GOD." Acts v. 39.

Page 8. *note* (10.)

Open and conſpicuous vengeance on his enemies and blaſphemers.] The true God was only regarded as the *tutelary* God of the *Jews*, and every oppoſition to his religion therefore was directly made a trial of ſtrength between the *rival* Deities. See 1 Sam. ch. iv. 5—10. The miſtake of Ahaz in this point, 2 Chron. ch. xxviii. affords a curious inſtance of the notions of thoſe times: Smitten by the Aſſyrians for his wickedneſs, he concluded *their Gods* had prevailed, and therefore began to "ſacrifice to the *Gods* of Damaſcus that "ſmote him, ſaying, Becauſe the *Gods* of the kings of "Syria help *them*, therefore will *I* ſacrifice to them, "that they may help *me*. But *they were the ruin of the* "*king, and of all Iſrael.*" This character of thoſe early times is not ſufficiently conſidered by thoſe who object to the conduct of the Jews under their Theocratical government: and as it is a favourite objection in this age of *Reaſon* and *ſentimental refinement*, I ſhall treat of it at ſome length. There are two modes of ſtating this objection: in one, the Bible is accuſed as deſcribing the God of the Hebrews as a ſanguinary tyrant, delighting in blood, and exerciſing vengeance on his enemies without rule or meaſure. In the other, the Bible is only charged with a groſs inconſiſtency; and it is alleged, that however earneſtly upon ſome occaſions the attributes of mercy and goodneſs are aſcribed to God, the method of his dealings with the Canaanites, and his judgments in general, as repreſented in the Jewiſh records, are in no manner reconcileable to ſuch attributes. The firſt objection is falſe, and not worthy of attention: upon the latter, one queſtion immediately occurs, which perhaps ſhould be previouſly anſwered, before we can be acknowledged to be proper judges of the caſe. If we can reconcile all that paſſes in the world, and before our eyes, with theſe attributes of mercy and goodneſs in the Deity, as attributes of *conſtant, unqualified*, and *uninterrupted* energy, then we *may* be adequate judges of the ſubject in debate. If we can prove, that it is *impoſſible* that any human creature ſhould be ſubjected to pain and diſtreſs with the connivance and conſent of a *merciful* and *good* God, then

then we muſt needs have recourſe to the Manichean God of evil, to help us through the difficulty, not only of interpreting the Scriptures of the Jews, but the common events of this viſible world.

I ſhall apply myſelf to do away *this* charge of *inconſiſtency*, not only becauſe it is the only charge that can with any juſtice be alleged againſt the Jewiſh Scriptures, but becauſe it ſeems to admit, what ſhould be admitted, namely, that theſe very ancient and remarkable books do contain very juſt deſcriptions of God's goodneſs, mercy, and beneficence, if they were not blended with other deſcriptions of a contrary nature. And it is remarkable, that many, in ſtating their objections to the inconſiſtencies in queſtion, expreſsly refer to the very paſſage I ſhould ſelect in proof of the conſiſtency of the Bible. In the 34th chapter of Exodus we have a remarkable deſcription of the Deity, in the proclamation of the name of God, at the renewal of the tables. *And the Lord paſſed by, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in mercy and truth; keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity and tranſgreſſion and ſin, and that will by no means clear the guilty: viſiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.* It is to be remarked, that this is repreſented as proceeding from God himſelf. This is a divine revelation of his own attributes. Who could write ſuch a legend as this? Who could put together ſuch *apparent* contradictions, and expect to be believed? Was it a fool who wrote this? No, ſays the *Philoſopher*, not a fool, for his *reaſon* had diſcovered to him one of the moſt important facts in the hiſtory of the univerſe; namely, that God is *merciful* and *gracious*, *long-ſuffering*, and *abundant* in *mercy* and *truth:* a fact, on which the human reaſon may ſafely rely, as a ſecurity againſt all vain terrors, the fears of *hell*, and torments of futurity. No, ſays the *Socinian*, not a fool, becauſe he juſtly deſcribes God as too merciful, and too forgiving, to need any *atonement for ſin.* [See *Prieſtley's Appeal to the ſerious and candid Profeſſors of Chriſtianity.*] It is remarkable, as I ſaid before, that both the *Philoſopher* and the *Socinian* ſhould expreſsly refer to this paſſage in proof of God's

everlaſting goodneſs and mercy, and yet not notice the *inconſiſtency* of the paſſages, *otherwiſe*, than by fairly *leaving out (which they do)* all the *other* parts of the deſcription. Shall we ſay then, that he who was wiſe enough to ſatisfy the Deiſt and Socinian, as to the moſt glorious attributes of the Creator, had not wit or wiſdom enough to ſee, that vengeance could *not* belong to a *merciful* God? Is the text interpolated? No. How could it? Would the interpolator of the ſecond part have ſeen no contradiction to his interpolation in the preceding terms? Would he not have *expunged* as well as interpolated? *Certainly*, had he had but ſo much diſcernment as a modern Socinian. Whoever therefore wrote, or even by interpolation made this paſſage to run as it does, muſt have conceived it equally poſſible for the ſame God to exerciſe *mercy*, and to execute *vengeance*; he muſt have conceived it to be no contradiction to repreſent the ſame Deity as tranſcendent in kindneſs, yet "extreme to mark what is done amiſs." Or, as Lactantius expreſsly deſcribes him, "erga pios *indulgentiſſimus Pater*, adverſus impios *rectiſſimus Judex*." Thoſe then who admit that this paſſage contains a juſt, and (as in the caſe of the Socinians) an *authoriſed* account of God's attributes in one particular, may not reject the other part of the account, becauſe it contradicts their preconceived notions of things. And as the hiſtorical accounts of God's dealings with mankind correſpond with this deſcription, the next queſtion is, what was the wickedneſs to be puniſhed and corrected, and what were the meaſures purſued? I ſhall ſelect the *moſt prominent* act of divine vengeance, God's dealings with the *Canaanites*, and other enemies of the Jews.

It has been uſual to account for theſe meaſures of ſeverity three ways; firſt, by comparing them with natural calamities, as *earthquakes*, *famines*, *peſtilence*, &c. as proceeding from God's appointment, though by the inſtrumentality of mere natural cauſes, and *without notice* or *warning*; which ſhould be attended to, becauſe it is undeniable, that it makes the caſe of the Canaanites leſs objectionable even, than ſome events continually paſſing before our eyes. But of this hereafter. Secondly, ſome are for referring the whole to God's abſolute

ſolute decrees; too much to the entire excluſion of all *moral* conſiderations whatſoever. [See *Jamieſon on the Uſe of Sacred Hiſtory*.] And thirdly, others conceive God's word to have been ſo pledged by the promiſe made to Abraham, as to have admitted of no alternative. But the ſimpleſt ſolution is to be found in the Scripture itſelf, and the circumſtances of the times when the events happened. Let us but *ſuppoſe* the caſe, (the *real* caſe fully appears to have been ſo,) that except what God had been juſt pleaſed to reveal of himſelf to Moſes, no nation in the whole world *then* knew or acknowledged the *one true* GOD: that, through a corruption of the religion derived by tradition from Adam, they had been brought to *put their truſt* in numberleſs *tutelary* Deities, to the excluſion of the very name of God. And let us ſuppoſe further, that the only people, among whom there was any chance of God's being juſtly acknowledged and duly worſhipped, were in a ſtate of perſecution, deſpiſed and oppreſſed. God never acts ſo as to over-rule the human mind, but to guide it by notices and warnings, and motives. Let us now proceed a ſtep further, and ſuppoſe ſuch a caſe to be in contemplation, that the knowledge of the true God was to be revived in men's minds, by openly convincing them of the vanity and folly of putting their truſt in idols; the danger of *defying* the God of Iſrael, and of the manifeſt and certain benefit of truſting ſolely to *his* care and protection. The firſt caſe could only be proved by the diſcomfiture of thoſe who truſted in idols: the ſecond, by ſome moſt impreſſive vindication of the majeſty and power of the true God; and the laſt, by a conſtant ſupport of thoſe, who were known and acknowledged to put their truſt in HIM. Is not all this peculiarly conſiſtent with the ſpirit of Moſes's appeals to God, whenever the Iſraelites offended, that he would not withdraw his protection from them, for fear that thoſe, who looked upon them as under the peculiar care of God, ſhould ſay, "Becauſe the Lord "*was not able* to bring this people into the land, which "he ſware unto them, therefore he hath ſlain them in "the wilderneſs." (Numbers xiv. Deut. ix. 28.) Is not this conſiſtent with what Jethro ſays to Moſes, after the latter had recounted to him "all that he had

"done

" done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Iſrael's " ſake?" " Now I know that the Lord is greater than " *all Gods*; for in *the thing* wherein they *dealt proudly* " HE was *above them.*" Exod. xviii.

But there cannot poſſibly be any caſes adduced ſo ſtrong as thoſe recounted in the 18th chapter of the firſt book, and 19th chapter of the ſecond book of Kings; and in the 3d chapter of the book of Daniel. I never read thoſe hiſtories without conceiving that I have then a full view of God's diſpenſations in Judea, and of the neceſſity ariſing out of the circumſtances of the times, for his eſpecial interpoſition. In all the three inſtances we have a mighty king at the head of a conſpiracy and confederacy againſt the living God, and whole nations concerned in the event. In each caſe idolatry is reſiſted and expoſed with ſuch a rational and holy confidence in the true God; ſuch a ſteady and determined reliance on his juſt vindication of his own inſulted honour, as every diſpaſſionate man muſt allow the occaſions expreſsly called for. In the two inſtances of *Ahab* and *Nebuchadnezzar*, how ſatisfactory and convincing are the concluſions of each relation! the ſtrong emotions of the ſubjects of the former, on the deſcent of the fire from heaven, and their ſudden exclamation, *The Lord he is God, the Lord he is God.* In the latter, the proclamation of Nebuchadnezzar himſelf, " Then Nebuchadnezzar ſpake " and ſaid, Bleſſed be the God of Shadrach, Meſhech, " and Abednego, who hath ſent his angel and deli- " vered his ſervants that truſted in him, and hath " *changed the King's word*, and yielded their bodies " that they might not ſerve nor worſhip any God ex- " cept their own God. Therefore I make a decree, " that every people, nation, and language, which ſpeak " any thing amiſs againſt the God of Shadrach, Me- " ſhech, and Abednego, ſhall be cut in pieces, and " their houſes ſhall be made a dunghill; becauſe *there* " *is no other God that can deliver after this ſort.*" Nor even in the ſecond inſtance adduced is the caſe leſs ſtriking. How muſt Sennacherib and all his people have reflected upon his vain boaſt againſt Judah, when he enumerated, not the nations, but the *Gods* of the nations, againſt whom he had prevailed! " Have *the*

" *Gods*

" *Gods of the nations* delivered thoſe which my father " deſtroyed, as *Gozan*, and *Haran*, and *Rezeph*, and the " children of *Eden*, which are in *Thelaſar?* Where is " the king of *Hamath*, and the king of *Arpad*, and the " king of the city of *Sepharvaim*, of *Hena*, and *Ivah?*" Theſe indeed are, all three of them, very conſpicuous inſtances of the *defiance* of the God of Iſrael. But let us remember alſo, that though God was, certainly, to *theſe idolaters*, chiefly " the God of *Iſrael* only," that is, the tutelary Deity of the Jews; yet their proceedings, and the tendency of their *defiance* was, to reject him alſo as the moral Governor of the world: their *ſacrifices* and *oblations*, their *treſpaſs offerings*, and *vows*, were all devoted to their own Gods, and reſembled their groſs and impure nature. This is ſo well known, that it need not be inſiſted on. It was not the *religion* of the world only, but the *morals*, that required correction, for they were intimately connected with the idolatry of the times. The *defiance* of the God of Iſrael therefore was not leſs than a defiance of God and all his moral attributes; and every thing connected with morality, as well as religion, depended on the vindication of God's irreſiſtible ſupremacy.

There could be no harm, under theſe circumſtances, in God's acting by the Iſraelites as *though he was* their *tutelary* Deity, the great object being to detach the profane nations from their idols. The acknowledgment of God in his proper character would have followed upon ſuch a converſion. This is only mentioned in alluſion to the conſtruction Lord Bolingbroke is pleaſed to put upon the covenant made with Abraham. [See *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, vol. ii. 125. 5th edit.] There is a paſſage in the book of Wiſdom, in which the diſtinction is beautifully pointed out. " Nei- " ther is there any God but THOU, that careſt for all." ch. xii. 13. This is ſuppoſed evidently to allude to the ancient worſhip of *tutelary* Deities.

But here another queſtion is ſtated. Suppoſing the interference of God to be neceſſary, " If God wiſhes to " puniſh," ſays M. Volney, " are not earthquakes, vol- " canoes, and the thunderbolt in his hand? Does a God " of clemency know no other way of correcting but " by extermination?" (*Révolut. des Empires*, ch. xiii.)

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We anſwer, Yes; he employs perhaps earthquakes, volcanoes, and lightning, as well as extermination, even to this day. The queſtion is, was there ſpecial and apparent reaſon for the very *mode* of correction recorded in the Scriptures? And to this we anſwer, *Yes*. We have already ſpoken of the caſe of *defiance*, and we will venture to ſay, that if the hiſtorical parts of the Old Teſtament are carefully examined, almoſt every caſe may be reſolved by this ſingle circumſtance; that it was a caſe of actual *defiance* againſt God, and wherein victory and ſucceſs would have led to the moſt extenſive and fatal conſequences. But to return to M. Volney. We are bound to conclude the mode of extermination to be neceſſary for ſome high purpoſes, if we will but allow the Scriptures to ſpeak for themſelves; for to ſhew that God did not *delight* in the blood of his enemies, as ſome chooſe to inſiſt, David is not even allowed to build the Temple of God, but Solomon is preferred. And why? Becauſe the former "*had ſhed* "*blood abundantly*, and *made great wars*;" and the latter was to be "a *man of reſt*." 1 Chron. xxii. 8, 9. And yet, that David was an inſtrument in God's hands, in moſt caſes, he himſelf inſinuates, ib. xxviii. 3, 4. M. Volney alſo betrays great *ignorance* by his queſtion, as it has been moſt ably ſhewn, that earthquakes, famine, peſtilence, &c. were *not* the proper puniſhments, theſe being referred by the Pagans to the agency of their falſe Gods: [ſee *Owen's Sermons*, and *Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs*, &c.] The character of thoſe ages was, that "they deemed either *fire*, or *wind*, or the *ſwift* "*air*, or the circle of the *ſtars*, or the violent *water*, "or the *lights of heaven*, to be the *Gods* that govern the "world:" it was fitting they ſhould be taught "how "much mightier HE is, who maketh them." Wiſdom xiii. 2. 4.

In the deſcription of the Deity, which has been the principal ſubject of this long note, we find it aſcribed to the Deity, "that he will viſit the ſins of the fathers "upon the children, unto the third and fourth gene-"rations." This happens to be a part of the Decalogue, and that part which Mr. Paine, in his *Age of Reaſon*, chooſes to aſſert, "is contrary to every princi-"ple of moral juſtice." But I ſuppoſe Mr. Paine would not

not deny, that in the common courſe of things children do ſuffer for the ſins of their fathers, conſequentially, though not vindictively: and that this was in the view of the divine Legiſlator may be ſeen by comparing Deut. xxiv. 16. and the reference made to it in the caſe of Amaziah, 2 Kings xiv. 6. And this will be conſiſtent with Ezekiel xviii. The ſon is not to ſuffer *for*, but often in conſequence of, his father's iniquities. And let this be recollected, that at all events God can foreſee a time for compenſation, a time to come, when the ſon ſhall *no more* be puniſhed for the iniquity of his father, but "when the righteouſneſs of the righteous "ſhall be upon the righteous, and the wickedneſs of "the wicked upon the wicked." If the queſtion had related only to the policy of the caſe, we might cite Cicero in defence of the meaſure, who praiſes it as a wiſe proceeding. "Parentium ſcelera filiorum pœnis "lui—hoc *præclare* legibus comparatum eſt, ut caritas "liberorum amiciores parentes reipublicæ redderet." *Epiſt. ad Brut.* epiſt. xii. and in the xvth epiſt. he calls it "et antiquum et omnium civitatum." Had Mr. Paine been capable of reading Cicero, he would ſcarce have ventured to ſay, that no lawgiver would have thought of ſuch an expedient; and he might alſo have learnt from the following references, how general the notion was, that children were to ſuffer for the ſins of their parents. *Theognis* 729. &c. *Solon* 25. &c. *Oraculum Delph. apud Ælian. Var. Hiſt.* lib. iii. 43. *Plutarch. de his qui ſero numine puniuntur. Hor.* Od. xxviii. 30. lib. i. et vi. 1. lib. iii. *Virg. Georg.* i. 501. et *Æneid.* viii. 484.

That Moſes had as delicate feelings in regard to the promiſcuous deſtruction of the righteous and wicked as any Freethinker whatever, may be ſeen in Numbers xvi. 22. when God, through Moſes, directs the Iſraelites *to have no mercy* on the Canaanites, as Deut. vii. 2. nor to *pity* the idolaters, Deut. xiii. 8. It is no more than a judicial ſentence of death, as may be ſeen by the caſe of the murderer, Deut. xix. 13. See alſo Deut. xxv. 12.

A queſtion often ariſes in the diſcuſſion of this point, which is not unfrequently determined againſt the Bible; namely, whether God's *expreſs direction* is in reality, as to

to its moral effects, different from his permiſſion; and I mention it the more freely, becauſe in another caſe Infidels ſeem to have decided it, againſt themſelves. In the queſtion of *neceſſity* they make no difference between the permiſſion and immediate direction of motives. See the *King of Pruſſia's Letters to Voltaire:* "Car "que Dieu nous *donne la liberté de mal faire*, ou qu'il nous "*pouſſe immédiatement au crime*, cela revient à-peu-près "au même; il n'y a que du plus ou du moins." Therefore if we had only *fataliſts* to deal with, there would clearly be no queſtion about this: for that evils happen through God's permiſſion without an impeachment of his mercy, &c. none doubt but Atheiſts. "Quod per-"mittitur a cauſa potenti," ſays the learned *Dr. Burnet of the Charter-Houſe*, "quodammodo approbatur; ſi non "abſolute, ſaltem comparate." It has been very well obſerved by the learned Dr. Leland, in his reply to Tindal, that "if all the events that are related in Scripture "had been barely recorded, without aſſigning any reaſon "for them at all, they would not probably be thought "an objection either againſt Scripture or Providence, "ſince many of the ſame kind occur in the hiſtory of "all ages and nations." Part ii. ch. 12, 13. And indeed this is moſt true; and it would be difficult to ſay by what ſentiment the unbeliever is led to be ſo compaſſionate towards every idolater whom the holy Scriptures deſcribe as ſuffering under the hand of God, while the daily calamities that are ſuffered to fall promiſcuouſly on the juſt and unjuſt, the old and the young, give no ſhock to his reaſon. God by his ſervant Moſes commands the earth to open, and ſwallow up the *impious* Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. The Deiſt is ſhocked. His reaſon revolts. God permits a quantity of matter to ferment and kindle in the bowels of the earth, and overthrows a beautiful and fertile country, inhabited by millions of perſons. The Deiſt contemplates the ſcene, compaſſionates the ſufferers perhaps, but falls into no diſtruſt whatſoever of the mercy and loving-kindneſs of the God of nature!—M. de Voltaire compaſſionates Agag; and yet, let the puniſhment be judged of as it may, he could not without *prejudice* appear very amiable in M. de Voltaire's eyes; for what had he done? "His ſword had made women childleſs."

1 Sam.

1 Sam. xv. 23. That M. de Voltaire was liable to *ſuch prejudices*, ſee his *Siècle de Louis XIV.* where he can find excuſes enough for many moſt flagitious crimes.

This note is already too long; I ſhall therefore bring it to a concluſion with this general remark upon the Bible hiſtory, conſidered in regard to the times to which it refers. In the holy Scriptures then we certainly read of many nations and individuals being forewarned of evils coming upon them unleſs they would repent, and of many evils being averted from them upon their repentance: we read of many groſs wickedneſſes adequately puniſhed, ſuch as *murder*, *inceſt*, *adultery*, *theft*, and *treachery*: we read of nothing more frequently than the diſcountenancing of idolatry in all its forms, and with all its horrid and diſguſting rites. But in profane hiſtories, eſpecially thoſe that reach back to the times and events recorded in Scripture, we read of ſimilar evils, *without any notice or warning*, falling promiſcuouſly on the deſerving and undeſerving, without mitigation or *alternative*. We read of inceſts, rapes, murders, and every poſſible atrocity committed without ſcruple, and without any ſpecific puniſhment. And we read of the groſſeſt idolatry accompanied with the baſeſt and moſt abominable practices, and with ſcarce one inſtance of true and genuine religion. Of wars we read in both hiſtories, and of the ruin and deſtruction of divers people: but in regard to the wars in the land of Canaan, independent of all other conſiderations, two things are noticeable which are generally overlooked: firſt, that the Canaanites had warning given them of what was coming upon them, and for *what cauſe*, as appears from what Rachel ſays, Joſhua ii. 9, 10, &c. and what the Gibeonites declared to Joſhua, chap. ix. Secondly, that all the cities and nations, which the Iſraelites deſtroyed, appeared in arms againſt them; not one of them made overtures of peace, or teſtified a wiſh for it; nay, ſome of them even made war againſt thoſe who did do ſo, and merely on that account. See Joſhua x. 4.

Page 13. *note* (11).

Which is not attainable by the Theologian.] Mr. Gibbon is tempted to ridicule the Abbé de la Bleterie's wiſh, that ſome *Théologien Philoſophe* would undertake the refutation

tion of Julian: "a ſtrange Centaur!" he remarks. See note 31. ch. xxiii. Such Centaurs however *have* exiſted, *do* exiſt, and always *may* exiſt.

Page 14. *note* (12).

They wiſh Revelation to be examined in all its points and bearings.] Without any fear of its not being found able to endure the examination and ſcrutiny of *Reaſon*, as Mr. Hume preſumes to inſinuate, vol. ii. *Eſſays*, p. 146. See Dr. Campbell's excellent remarks in his *Diſſertation on Miracles*, pp. 232, 233. and the concluſion of *Biſhop Warburton's Tract on Grace.*

Page 15. *note* (13.)

"Upon this general view of the Scripture, I would "remark, how great a length of time the whole rela- "tion takes up, near ſix thouſand years of which "are paſt; and how great a variety of things it treats "of: the natural and moral ſyſtem or hiſtory of the "world, including the time when it was firſt formed, "all contained in the very firſt book, and evidently "written in a rude and unlearned age; and in ſubſe- "quent books, the various common and prophetic "hiſtory, and the particular diſpenſation of Chriſti- "anity. Now all this together gives the largeſt ſcope "for criticiſm, and for confutation of what is capa- "ble of being confuted, either from reaſon or from "common hiſtory, or from any inconſiſtence in its "ſeveral parts. And it is a thing which deſerves, I "think, to be mentioned, that whereas ſome imagine, "the ſuppoſed doubtfulneſs of the evidence for reve- "lation implies a poſitive argument that it is not true; "it appears, on the contrary, to imply a poſitive argu- "ment that it *is* true. For could any common relation, "of ſuch antiquity, extent, and variety, (for in theſe "things the ſtreſs of what I am now obſerving lies,) "be propoſed to the examination of the world, that it "could not in an age of *knowledge* and *liberty* be con- "futed, or ſhewn to have nothing in it to the ſatisfac- "tion of reaſonable men; this would be thought a "ſtrong preſumptive proof of its truth." *Butler's Ana- logy*, Part II. chap. vii. p. 380.

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Page 16. *note* (14).

Such a connected chain of facts.] We may add ſo *uniform* a hiſtory in all reſpects. For, as Juſtin Martyr well obſerves, the agreement of the ſacred writers is argument ſufficient of their inſpiration, compared with the inconſiſtencies and contradictions to be found in all the ſyſtems of the Pagan philoſophers, Plato and Ariſtotle not excepted; and conſidering the ſubjects upon which they agreed. His expreſſions are very ſtrong; they inſtruct us, ſays he, "Ὥσπερ ἐξ ἑνὸς στόματος καὶ μίας γλωτ̃ης "καὶ περὶ Θεοῦ, καὶ περὶ κόσμου κτίσεως, καὶ περὶ πλάσεως Ἀν- "θρώπου, καὶ περὶ ἀνθρωπίνης ψύχης ἀθανασίας, καὶ τ̃ης μετὰ "τὸν βίον τοῦτον μέλλουσης κρίσεως, καὶ περὶ πάντων ὧν ἀναγ- "καῖον ἡμῖν ἐστὶν εἰδέναι—ἀκολούθως καὶ συμφώνως ἀλλήλοις— "καὶ ταῦτα ἐν διαφόροις τοποῖς καὶ χρόνοις." *Cohort. ad Græcos*, p. 7. edit. Sylburg. 1593. See alſo his introduction to the *Ariſtotelian Doctrines*, where he notices the agreement of the ſacred writers in regard to the creation, as well as in reſpect to the Deity himſelf.

Page 18. *note* (15).

Mr. Paine's Age of Reaſon perhaps was the moſt miſchievous book that appeared, from its ſmall ſize and popular ſtyle: but many other writers continually deſcribe the æra of the French revolution by the title he adopted for his book. See *Dr. Darwin's Zoonomia*, *Godwin's Polit. Juſtice*, and *Wolſtonecroft's View of the French Revolution*. But the greateſt diſtinction of *this peculiar* Age of Reaſon is, aſſuredly, the abſurd and idolatrous *deification* of her in the French republic: and the ſpirit of the age may be well diſcerned in the painting of the celebrated David, hung up in the *Hôtel des Invalides*, delineating the triumph of *man* over *Religion* and *Royalty*, the *Goddeſs* of *Reaſon* being deſcribed as encouraging and approving the overthrow of *thrones* and *altars*. This overthrow is heightened in the picture alluded to by every thing violent, horrid, and iniquitous. All of which, it is ſhocking to ſay, has been, in the courſe of the revolution, fully *realiſed*. And as to the *cataſtrophe* of this great ſtruggle, ſurely we may *now* (1804) apply what Lactantius ſays, to *their* deification of both *Reaſon* and

Liberty. "Has ergo *falsas consecrationes* sequitur quod "neceſſe eſt. Qui enim virtutes *sic* colunt, id eſt, qui "*umbras* et *imagines* virtutum conſectantur; ea ipſa "quæ *vere* ſunt, *tenere non poſſunt!*" Lib. i. 20. I am ſorry to add to this note, that our own metropolis *was* diſgraced by a *temple* of *Reaſon*. The following is a conciſe account of the dedication of ſuch temples in the city of Paris, taken from the addreſs of a reſpectable magiſtrate of the United States to the grand jury of Luzerne county, and inſerted by Mr. Fuller in his *Tract on Deiſm*. "They ordered '*the Temple of Reaſon*' to be "inſcribed on the churches, in contempt of the doc- "trine of Revelation. Atheiſtical and licentious ho- "milies have been publiſhed in the churches inſtead of "the old ſervice, and a ludicrous imitation of the "Greek mythology exhibited under the title of '*the* "'*Religion of Reaſon*.' Nay, they have gone ſo far as to "dreſs up a common ſtrumpet with the moſt fantaſtic "decorations, whom they blaſphemouſly ſtyled the "'*Goddeſs of Reaſon*,' and who was carried to church on "the ſhoulders of ſome Jacobins, ſelected for the pur- "poſe, eſcorted by the National Guards, and the conſti- "tuted *Authorities*. When they got to the church, "the ſtrumpet was placed on the altar erected for the "purpoſe, and harangued the people; who in return "profeſſed the deepeſt adoration to her, and ſung the "*Carmagnole* and other ſongs, by way of worſhipping "her. This horrid ſcene—almoſt too horrid to relate— "was concluded by burning the Prayer-book, Confeſ- "ſional, and every thing appropriated to the uſe of "public worſhip: numbers in the mean time danced "round the flames with every appearance of frantic "and infernal mirth." I ſhall only add, that this was at the very time when the *National Convention applauded* and *ſanctioned* the ſpeech of M. Dupont, wherein he profeſſed himſelf an *Atheiſt*; and wherein were the following curious expreſſions: "Thrones are overturned! "Sceptres broken! Kings expire! And yet the altars "of God remain! A ſingle breath of enlightened Rea- "ſon will now be ſufficient to make them diſappear— "*Nature* and *Reaſon*, theſe ought to be the Gods of men! "Theſe are *my* Gods!"

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Page 19. *note* (16).

" Quos equidem ſi putarem ſatis idoneos ad bene vi-
" vendum duces eſſe, et ipſe ſequerer, et alios ut ſeque-
" rentur hortarer." *Lactantius*, lib. i.

Page 20. *note* (17).

" The ſuſpicion, that the theory of what is called the
" Chriſtian religion is fabulous, is becoming very ex-
" tenſive in all countries." *Age of Reaſon.* " The
" Chriſtian theory" (Query, what does this mean?)
" is little elſe than the idolatry of the ancient mytho-
" logiſts, accommodated to the purpoſes of power and
" profit. And it yet remains to Reaſon and Philoſophy
" to aboliſh the amphibious fraud." Our preſent age, ſays M. de Gebelin, Author of the *Monde Primitif*, has made the moſt rapid ſtrides towards perfection. " Notre ſiècle eſt le ſiècle des découvertes et des lu-
" mieres;" probably, " nous touchons au moment de
" la grande révolution, que le rétabliſſement *du grand*
" *ordre* eſt réſervé à notre ſiècle." M. de Gebelin did not rely upon *Reaſon*, but upon the viſible *order of Nature*, to ſet us to rights. In this, both himſelf and Rouſſeau, who was for truſting every thing to *conſcience* or *feeling*, differed from moſt other modern Deiſts. In other reſpects they may both be conſidered as conſpicuous characters of the *Age* of *Reaſon*. M. de Gebelin was a believer in animal magnetiſm, ancient ſorcery, aſtrology, &c. Of the latter he ſays in one of his writings, " dont, malgré les abus, on n'a jamais pu démon-
" trer ni l'incertitude, ni l'inutilité." They were both advocates for the ſyſtem of " *perfectibility*;" but ſo widely different in their ideas, that while M. de Gebelin's doctrine was " Perfectionnez vous," Rouſſeau's was, " Ne vous perfectionnez pas."

Page 21. *note* (18).

Lactantius had *philoſophers* to deal with, of whom he ſays, " aut omnino nihil ſciunt, idque ipſum pro ſum-
" ma ſcientia præ ſe ferunt; aut qui non perſpiciunt
" etiam quæ ſciunt; aut qui, quoniam ſe putant ſcire,
" quæ neſciunt, inepte arroganterque deſipiunt." Lib. vi. 18. *Inſtitut.*

"If this age," says Bp. Berkeley, "be singularly "productive of infidels, I shall not therefore conclude "it to be more knowing, but only more presuming, "than former ages." *Minute Philosopher*, p. 345.

Page 21. *note* (19).

She has been invited *to interfere.*] That some of the primitive Fathers of the Church encouraged and invited the examination of their doctrines, see *Church's Answer to Middleton*, ch. viii. §. 9. where he defends Tertullian. Though the Fathers recommended submission to God's Revelation, when once known to be a Revelation; yet they by no means precluded enquiry into the truth of the Revelation. See *Athanasii Opera*, tom. ii. 325. and *Clemens Alexand. Strom.* lib. v. p. 550. cited by Edwards in his *Preservative against Socinianism*, pp. 9. 15. See also pp. 16, 17. of the same work, as to the province of *Reason* in judging of a divine Revelation, and *Bp. Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ*, pp. 148, 149. B. II. chap. viii.

With regard to many of the works with which the press has teemed in this *age* of *Reason*, we may observe with Mrs. West, in her admirable Letters to her Son, that "their authors do not audaciously demand to be "heard at the bar of *manly* Reason: they know *that* "tribunal unfavourable. It is to *juvenile* readers that "they apply." We might add, that, for the same reason, the *weak* and *illiterate* have been *appealed* to, in works not calculated to deceive the *well-instructed*. It is remarkable, that even Dr. Priestley and Dr. Geddes are to be suspected of such designs: the former in the preface to his *Early Opinions*, &c. says, "Least of all "can I expect to make any impressions on those who "are advanced in life: my chief expectations are from "the *young* and from *posterity*." And the *latter*, in the preface to his Version of the Pentateuch, expresses a hope, that, by his "*free* manner of interpreting the Bi"ble, he may procure its being read and studied by "*fashionable scholars*, and the *sons* of science." p. 13. It is also well observed by Mr. Fuller, in the introduction of his work, entitled *The Gospel its own Witness*, that, "notwithstanding all the boasts of Reason "among modern Deists, not one in ten of them can be

"kept

" kept to the fair and honourable uſe of this weapon. " On the contrary, they are driven to ſubſtitute dark " inſinuation, low wit, profane ridicule, and groſs ab- " uſe. Such were the weapons of Shafteſbury, Tindal, " Morgan, Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Hume, and Gibbon; " and ſuch are the weapons of the author of the *Age* " *of Reaſon.*"

Page 21. *note* 20.

" Si les Déiſtes avoient pu ſe choiſir une époque pro- " pre à provigner leurs ſentimens, laquelle auroient- " ils préférée? réduits, comme ils le ſont, à combattre " avec des ſophiſmes, ils auroient du choiſir un ſiècle " où l'on ſe piquât plus de briller que de raiſonner; où " le bel eſprit jouât de grand rôle, où le ridicule ſur- " tout fût de tous les fléaux le plus rédouté; où la li- " cence des mœurs donnât à la religion un air auſtère " et ſauvage. N'eſt-ce pas là le tableau de l'Europe " depuis au moins quatre-vingts ans?" See a ſmall work, entitled, *L'Impie démaſqué.* The author concludes, from the ſmall ſucceſs of Deiſts with ſuch advantages on their ſide, in addition to their own talents, and their indefatigable exertions, that they never can be expected to prevail.

Page 23. *note* (21).

Man was meant to be left in ignorance.] I would here obſerve, that the peculiar manner, in which the *internal viſcera* are ſecluded from our own inſpection, would ſeem to offer a complete reply to the fancy of thoſe who have conceived, that one time or other " *Mind* " *would become omnipotent over matter,*" inſomuch as to give us " a power of maintaining the human body in " *perpetual* youth and vigour." *Godwin.* This is one of the moſt brilliant proſpects modern philoſophy ſeems to have opened to us. There would appear however to be a preciſe barrier eſtabliſhed in the human frame, which we are forbidden to paſs, if the following account of *Ganglions* be admiſſible; namely, that being attached wholly to nerves which ſupply the organs which have *involuntary* motion, and being *non*-electric bodies, they are the *checks* which prevent our *volitions* from extending to them. See the *Philoſophy of Medicine*, vol. ii. p. 174. and pp. 179, 180; where the em-

 barraſſments,

barraſſments, that might have enſued from ſubjecting the vital involuntary motions to the will of the individual, are well detailed. In *Nieuwentyt's Religious Philoſopher* it is obſerved, that thoſe parts only that have their nerves from the *cerebellum*, as the arms, hands, legs, &c. are ſubject to the will, and not thoſe which derive their nerves from the *cerebrum*, as the heart, arteries, ſtomach, bowels, &c. See alſo *Synopſis Metaphyſicæ Glaſg.* Part. iii. cap. 1. edit. 4; and ſome good remarks on what God has *concealed* from us, in the Dialogue on Syſtematic Phyſics, in the *Spectacle de la Nature.* "Ubi ergo ſapientia eſt? Ut neque te omnia "ſcire putes; quod DEI eſt; neque omnia neſcire, "quod *pecudis.* Eſt enim aliquod medium, quod ſit "Hominis, id eſt, ſcientia cum ignoratione conjuncta et "temperata." *Lact. Inſtit.* lib. iii. 6. See alſo lib. ii. cap. 8.

Page 25. *note* (22).

As to the actual certainty of the matter.] "Hardly do "we gueſs aright at things that are upon earth, and "with labour do we find the things that are before us; "but the things that are in heaven who hath ſearched "out? And thy counſel who hath known? Except "thou give wiſdom, and ſend thy HOLY SPIRIT from "above." Wiſdom ix. 16, 17. How valuable an *example* alſo have we for the modeſt uſe of our reaſon in regard to ſuch ſpeculations, as well as for our reliance on Revelation alone, in the caſe of the prophet Ezekiel; who being aſked, in the Valley of Bones, whether *they* could revive, only replied, "O Lord God, THOU "knoweſt." chap. xxxvii. ver. 3. See alſo ſome admirable and very applicable paſſages, Eccleſiaſticus iii. 21—25. Without Revelation, ſays Archbp. Tillotſon, "man "is ſecure of nothing he enjoys in this world, and un-"certain of every thing he hopes for." But leſt theſe references ſhould be diſputed, ſee the 4th Reflexion, §. 18. of the *Philoſophie du Bon Sens* of the Marquis d'Argens, and Mr. Gibbon's 15th chapter; where is the following remark: "As the moſt ſublime efforts of "philoſophy," ſays he, "can extend no further than "to point out the deſire, the hope, or at moſt the pro-"bability of a future ſtate, there is nothing but a di-"vine Revelation that can aſcertain its exiſtence."

Page

Page 27. *note* (23).

What we can now only behold, &c.] That our *merely bodily* faculties are *capable* of more than the common uſes we put them to at preſent, it ſeems reaſonable to conjecture, from the application of optical inſtruments, which do not alter the *organ* of viſion, but only tend to vary the *medium* through which we behold objects.

Page 28. *note* (24).

The age of Reaſon cannot be an age when Reaſon is to act without regard to theſe intellectual treaſures.] "In "diſquiſitions on which we cannot determine without "much learned inveſtigation, *Reaſon uninformed* is by "no means to be depended on." *Soame Jenyns.* It is a remark of Rouſſeau, in oppoſition to la Mothe and l'Abbé Terraſſon, that human Reaſon cannot now be ſaid to be really *advanced* as a *faculty*; for what it has gained on one ſide it has loſt on the other. "Que tous "les eſprits partent toujours du même point, et que le "temps qu'on emploie à ſavoir ce que d'autres ont "penſé étant perdu pour apprendre à penſer ſoi-même, "on a plus de lumieres acquiſes, et moins de vigueur "d'eſprit." *Emile*, liv. iv. 206. "In regard to know-"ledge," ſays the ingenious Mrs. Weſt, "it is fair to "ſay, we live in a late period, heirs to a rich inherit-"ance." See her *Letters to her Son*, Lett. iii.

Of all the works that ſhould be conſulted in an *age* of *Reaſon*, by thoſe who are really diſpoſed to conſider it as ſuch, I would by all means recommend the following excellent Tracts of Mr. Boyle. I refer to the folio edition of his works. Vol. iii. article 28. *On the Reconcileableneſs of Reaſon and Religion.* Vol. iv. art. 10. *A Diſcourſe of Things above Reaſon.* Ib. art. 20. *On the high Veneration Man owes to God peculiar for his Wiſdom and Power.* Ib. art. 21. *A free Enquiry into the vulgarly received notion of Nature.* Ib. art. 24. *A Diſquiſition about the Final Cauſes of Natural Things.* Vol. v. art. 2. *The Chriſtian Virtuoſo*, with the *Appendix*, and ſecond Part, articles 10 and 11.

SERMON II.

ACTS v. 38, 39.

And now I ſay unto you, Refrain from theſe men, and let them alone: For if this counſel or this work be of man, it will come to nought:
But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.

IN my laſt Diſcourſe I conſidered this advice of the learned Jew as ſupplying us with a teſt of the truth of our moſt holy religion, not only particularly adapted to the proof of its being of GOD, but as including a call upon every true Chriſtian to examine, from time to time, what has been done, or may be doing, by *man*, to bring it "to *nought*."

I alſo noticed the ſignificant title, which had been given to the age in which we live; and I confeſſed myſelf not unwilling to acknowledge, that, from the rapid advancement of human knowledge of late years, Reaſon *might* now have ſome advantages ſhe could not command before; ſo that man's

man's oppoſition to Revelation, as far as the latter depends for its reception on argument, or learning, or diſcoveries, may in this late conteſt have appeared more critical than in former ones (1).

There is ſcarce one doctrine of Revelation, or even a fact recorded in the books of Scripture, at which the human Reaſon has not at different times taken offence. She revolts at the hiſtory of the creation of the earth, and particularly at the low æra aſſigned to it; at the account of the origin of the human ſpecies, the temptation and fall of man, and introduction of evil into the world; at the call of the Iſraelites; the inſtitution of ſacrifices; the extirpation of idolators. She will not hear of redemption and atonement by *blood*, the Incarnation, or the Trinity. She will not bear to be told, that ſhe needs any ſupernatural inſtruction, but ſtill confidently maintains, or rather more confidently than ever was the caſe before, that the viſible works of God are the only Revelation we can expect or deſire, not only of the *power*, and *wiſdom*, and *majeſty* of the ſupreme Being, but of his *word* and his *will* (2).

Our

Our reply to many of theſe objections would lie in a narrow compaſs, if we could have leave to reduce the ſeveral queſtions to their true terms, and confine them within their proper limits; but where *hiſtory* and *criticiſm* ſhould decide, we are for ever interrupted by metaphyſical and moral arguments, wholly inapplicable to the caſe. If we were to comply with all the demands of Deiſts, we ſhould not be allowed to appeal to the Canon of Scripture, till we had determined by *à priori* reaſoning both the utility and neceſſity of Revelation in general. We ſhould not be allowed to plead the evidence of miracles, till we had not only demonſtrated their poſſibility, but the ſufficiency and competency of *any* evidence to prove them true. It is not recollected all the while, that if the Scriptures are but *authentic*, there can be no doubt upon any of theſe points. And it is a remarkable circumſtance, and can only be referred to the eſpecial bleſſing and providence of God, that if the ſacred books are *not* authentic, they are peculiarly capable of contradiction: and perhaps never more ſo than in this age, ſo much

much boaſted, not of *Reaſon* merely, but of experiment and enquiry.

New objections there may ſtill be none to notice (s), but only ſuch additions to old ones, as the advancement of knowledge juſt alluded to may have ſerved to ſupply. I have propoſed ſome arrangement of theſe objections, by referring them to the ſeveral heads of History, Physics, Metaphysics, Ethics, and Criticism: an arrangement, which, as far as it can be done, I ſtill mean to purſue. Under the head of History I propoſe to conſider the extraordinary defect of all records and hiſtorical monuments, that could be alleged to be in *poſitive contradiction* to the Moſaic writings; even now that the whole globe has been traverſed, and every enquiry of that nature purſued and encouraged in a way unknown before. Under the head of Physics I purpoſe to give an account of the invincible obſtacles, that ſeem to be in the way of our attaining to any clear comprehenſion of the cauſes that *have* operated in time *paſt* in the body of the earth; ſo as to enable us to form any conjectures from thence concerning the high or low

low antiquity of the general maſs of our globe. I ſhall notice the conſent of many celebrated naturaliſts to the *low* antiquity of our preſent continents, as deduced from obſervation, and the extraordinary facts that tend to corroborate the Scripture accounts of an *univerſal* deluge. Under the head of METAPHYSICS I ſhall have ſome remarks to make on the preſent ſtate of the queſtions, concerning the *materiality* of the *ſoul*, and the *neceſſity* of *human actions*; and I ſhall have frequent occaſion incidentally to notice the inefficacy of all ſpeculative reaſonings on certain ſubjects connected with *Theology*. Under ETHICS I propoſe to conſider the indiſpenſable neceſſity of a divine Revelation for moral purpoſes; to notice ſome of the moſt offenſive moral principles and ſyſtems of modern reformers, and to ſhew how ably Chriſtianity has been vindicated from the charge of omiſſions in this line. And under the head of CRITICISM I ſhall endeavour to point out the great abuſes to which it has been expoſed; its great utility to ſecure us from the miſrepreſentations of modern Deiſts; and the ſatisfactory manner, in which it has recently been applied to confute the

the dogmatical aſſertions of modern Unitarians.

But there are ſtill ſome points, which will require to be conſidered in a more general way, and which cannot be diſtinctly brought under any of theſe heads. Such as the very extraordinary difference lately manifeſted in reſpect to the *ſeparation* of the *two Covenants*, and the *divine authority* of the *Old Teſtament*; and in regard to the *prejudices* and *prepoſſeſſions*, which have been ſaid to ſtand in the way of the due exerciſe of Reaſon, and more particularly in this place.

An eminent ſceptic [a] lays it down as one reaſon for the ancient Pagan religions being much looſer than the modern, that the former were *traditional*, and the latter *ſcriptural*. In this he may have been right; but when he adds, that having *no Canon*, the Pagan religions ſeemed to vaniſh like a cloud, when one approached to them and examined them piecemeal, we may ſurely inſiſt upon it, that this *want* of a *Canon* could not be the chief occaſion of their *weakneſs* and *inſtability*. A traditional religion may find a

[a] Hume.

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thouſand ſubterfuges and means of eſcape, when attacked, which will not be the caſe with a ſcriptural one: and ſo inconſiſtent are Deiſts, that I find this expreſsly admitted by another writer, no leſs eminent than the former for his enmity to our moſt holy religion [b]. The Canon forms one determinate object, againſt which every bolt may be directed; it cannot ſhelter itſelf under any obſcure tradition, or bring forward falſe legends and unheard-of tales to ſupport its ſinking credit: it muſt ſtand alone, and ſpeak for itſelf [c]; at leaſt ſuch is the ſtate of things according to the articles of our eſtabliſhed Church. *We* have no *tradition* or *infallible judge* to decide for us *authoritatively*. *We* admit no *Canon* but the *Holy Scriptures:* theſe may be perverted, (for the Socinians *pervert* them [d],) but they cannot be corrupted or altered [e].

We ſhould have a juſt right therefore to inſiſt upon referring every queſtion to the

[b] Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Rom. Emp. c. xxiii. p. 71.

[c] See Letters on Mythology, 120. 126. 130. London. 1748.

[d] See Edwards's Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm, part iv. 71.

[e] Jenkins's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, vol. ii. p. 117.

authen-

authenticity of the *Scriptures;* for if they are but true, we muſt ſtand reaſonably acquitted of all undue prejudice, in ſubmitting to the doctrines they contain; and ſo have they been tranſmitted to us, that it is ſcarcely poſſible to conceive that any writings could exiſt, more capable of confirmation if true, of contradiction if falſe.

The Author of the Pentateuch wrote of *facts,* and the Prophets propheſied of *facts.* The Author of the Pentateuch relates, that the world began at a certain period, (not a period ſo remote, as that no annals could reach it; but, in compariſon with the fabricated records of many nations, a *recent* period,) and that a certain people lived under a *theocracy* (4). Theſe are extraordinary facts to relate, becauſe they muſt have been expoſed, from the very firſt, to many contradictory evidences, the failure of which muſt be allowed to operate as a confirmation. The world might manifeſtly have been proved, from the *after*-diſcovery of *regular* hiſtorical records, from reſpectable tradition, from the ſuperior antiquity of arts and ſciences in ſome places, to be older. The interior of the earth, perhaps the form and faſhion of the earth

itſelf, *might* have ſupplied *chronometers* of irrefragable authority. And as to the *theocracy*, hiſtory might have been found to record, not the diſcomfiture and overthrow, but the triumphs of idolatry. The knowledge of the true God, according to the Scriptures, was in the early ages confined to a ſmall diſtrict comparatively, and we have the concurrent teſtimony of profane hiſtory to prove the general prevalence of idolatry all around. Do the records of the world teſtify, that the knowledge of the true God was propagated[f] from this ſmall diſtrict, *where the theocracy was ſaid to prevail*, to the overthrow of idolatry? or did their powerful and idolatrous neighbours, *who diſputed their pretenſions*, prevail againſt them?

Again, the Prophets propheſied of *facts* to happen. It is an eaſy enquiry, Have they happened? have they been fulfilled? They propheſied of *many* facts; many *connected* facts: Have any ſuch taken place? (5) Can we fix upon any ſeries of events correſpond-

[f] *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, vol. ii. Letter 28. and the *Miſcellaneous Obſervations of Jonathan Edwards*, §. 26.

ent thereto? They ſpecified particular *times*, particular *places*, particular *perſons*: Have any events tallied in theſe ſeveral points? Theſe are all curious enquiries, and depend on ſuch reſearches as ſhould at all events give a conſequence to the inveſtigation: reſearches and enquiries, which, ſo far from ſhrinking from, we claim at the hands of our adverſaries, as an act of juſtice. And ſhall we ſtill ſubmit to be told, that our reverence for the Bible is "the effect of pre-"judice!" that our "faith is not rational!" that we "believe without any rational mo-"tives for belief," and only on the "poſi-"tive aſſertions of an aſſumed authority, "which we have never diſcuſſed, and indeed "durſt not queſtion!" and that, in ſhort, our religion is only "the fruit of unenlight-"ened credulity!(6)"

Such miſrepreſentations, which have been but too common in all ages, have been more unjuſtifiably than ever revived of late. A celebrated ſeceder from the eſtabliſhed Church, in one of his publications, is thus pleaſed to ſpeak of the inſtitution of theſe very lectures: "Even public lectures," ſays he, "have been eſtabliſhed, and ſtipends an-

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" nexed to the preachers of them, *not to en-*
" *courage men in the ſtudy of Scriptures,*
" and in interpreting them in the ſenſe that
" approved itſelf to *their own judgment,* but
" in agreement with that which was *dic-*
" *tated by others.*" And could it be then to encourage the idle and unprincipled, that theſe lectures were founded? Could they be deſigned to ſanction hypocriſy, and reward ignorance? Was it to ſtifle learning in its very cradle, and to preclude enquiry and argument, in contradiction to the public inſtitutes of the place, which afford every encouragement, and ſupply every help conducive to the proper exerciſe and right conduct of both? The will of the pious and religious Founder is no mandate: it was never meant to be ſo; it could never operate as ſuch. It is an invitation and encouragement, held out to thoſe who *believe the ſame truths,* and *acknowledge the ſame faith,* to aſſiſt in the propagation of them for the behoof of others. It was manifeſtly ſo deſigned; and I would venture to affirm, in no one inſtance has the principle ever been departed from(7).

Another popular writer has alleged as a

charge againſt our *Univerſities*, that their forms of education all tend to encourage and ſupport the "*ſyſtem of permanence*," that is, to inculcate and diffuſe what has been diſcovered of old, rather than to aſſiſt in the diſcovery of what remains to be known ([8]). But ſurely, if we have attained to any *certainty* in any ſcience, if the human mind has reaſon to be ſatisfied as to the progreſs made in any branch of knowledge, this *ſhould* be taught as *permanent*, unleſs ſome very unexpected events ſhould occur, to overſet the principles on which it is founded. The ſcience of aſtronomy, for inſtance, muſt ſurely be taught as ſettled in regard to its moſt important principles, by our great countryman; not however to the excluſion of any proper and juſt examination of thoſe principles themſelves. And can we doubt whether our moſt holy religion ſhould be taught and inculcated on a footing of *permanence*, by thoſe who are entirely ſatisfied with its doctrines and morality, and ſo aſſured of the authenticity of the ſacred volumes, as to believe that no leſs than a ſecond manifeſt interpoſition of God could ever prove them falſe? The queſtion then, if it has

has any immediate reference to Religion, ſhould be reduced to this: Is any thing ſo taught in the Univerſities as *permanent*, as to preclude enquiry? Far otherwiſe: and it might be particularly inſiſted on, that even ſuch inſtitutions as are expreſsly formed for the ſupport and defence of old eſtabliſhments and received opinions, muſt provide for the due examination and refutation of all adverſe ſyſtems: argument muſt be oppoſed to argument, teſtimony to teſtimony, criticiſm to criticiſm.

It would be well for the world, if this "ſyſtem of permanence" had been univerſally adhered to with the ſame manly ſteadineſs and cautious prudence, which have not only diſtinguiſhed the Univerſities of this land, in theſe times, but the country in general. We have juſt cauſe to pride ourſelves in the reflection, that *we* have not, like others, madly abandoned to the rude demands of ſpeculators and reformers, opinions and principles, ſyſtems and inſtitutions, ſanctioned by experience, and recommended by the conſent and approbation of the wiſe and good, and learned of all ages. We have manfully withſtood the indiſcriminate outcry

againſt *prejudices*, not *precluding enquiry*, but very wiſely turning our enquiries on the *new* principles propoſed to us. *We* were not to be deluded into the ſtrange belief, that *indifference* to all Religion, both *ſpeculative* and *practical*, was the beſt qualification for the examination of divine truths, and that all reverence and reſpect for the Bible were to be laid aſide, before we could be competent to judge of the doctrines it contains. Theſe *preparatives*, if not expreſsly inſiſted on, have been in more inſtances than one approved and recommended, as the only means of attaining to "a ra-"tional ſyſtem of faith (9)." Thoſe who begin to argue with us by perſuading us to diveſt ourſelves of *prejudices*, ſhould always excite our ſuſpicion. What they call *prejudices* may be very valuable principles; and inſtead of ſecuring ourſelves from deluſion by ſurrendering them at diſcretion, we may very poſſibly be parting with the beſt means of ſecurity againſt deception of the worſt kind. No man comes into the world capable of helping himſelf; nobody comes into the world ſo unconnected as to depend entirely upon his own individual powers and diſcern-

diſcernment: he muſt require help and guidance, and to have the path of life pointed out to him, by thoſe who have travelled the road before him. Muſt he neglect all ſuch directions, and loſe himſelf in a wilderneſs, in order to have a better chance of diſcerning his way, as the random information of thoſe he happens to meet may ſeem reaſonable or not? Had he not better keep ſteadily to the "old paths," and be fearful of quitting them, except it ſhall be made *clear* and *certain*, that they *lead to deſtruction?* (10) Why ſhould we *not* ſuſpect thoſe who would endeavour to perſuade us, that ourſelves, and our fathers, and our fathers' fathers, have all been deceived; that parental care has only been exerted to ſeduce us into error; and that, if we will but believe this, we ſhall be more in the way to be happy, and better able to diſtinguiſh between truth and falſehood?

It is thus that any principles may be got rid of; and the times afford us a memorable inſtance of an expedient of the ſame nature in morals, which ſucceeded, to the diſgrace of the age, and the diſguſt of every feeling mind. Under pretence of amplifying and

enlarging the glorious principle of *univerſal benevolence*, ſo perfectly and ſo correctly inculcated and enforced, both by precept and parable, in Chriſt's Goſpel, every private connexion was ſhamefully miſrepreſented, and the firſt duties of life, the parental, the filial, the conjugal, were all trampled upon, and made a mockery of! For the *good* of *mankind*, as it was pretended, the ſon led his father to the ſcaffold, the father drove his ſon to the field, the mother beheld without lamentation the mangled carcaſe of the fruit of her own womb, fallen in the cauſe of rebellion and inſurrection, and every tie of private affection and conſanguinity was abandoned to riot, in the exceſſes of a frantic zeal, for the exaltation of the ſpecies, and the aſſertion of rights, entirely incompatible with the peace of ſociety, and the ſecurity of individuals (h).

Here was a ſyſtem founded on the *overthrow* and *mockery* of *ancient prejudices*; for every *feeling* and *affection*, if foſtered in the boſom of a *private* family only, was alſo denounced as among the *prejudices*[g], which

[g] See *Helvetius de l'Homme*, ſect. 11.

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ſtood in the way of the ſyſtem to be eſtabliſhed, of univerſal *anarchy*, for ſuch was in fact manifeſtly the end aimed at by thoſe well acquainted with the plot.

We cannot wonder then, ſince man has been once ſo deluded, as to be made to abandon the firſt principles and feelings of his nature; to caſt off all regard and affection for his offspring, all reſpect and reverence for the authors of his exiſtence, all the common charities and ties of ſocial life, if it ſhould have been thought as eaſy a matter to bring him to reject the ſacred truths of Revelation by repreſenting the ſacred writers to be impoſtors and fabuliſts [h]. It is not difficult to detect an impoſtor, who would perſuade us that he has a commiſſion from heaven, by a careful examination and ſcrutiny into his credentials: but it would be immediately repugnant to our feelings to expect to find an accredited prophet of the Moſt High, in a perſon we had been previouſly taught to deſpiſe. If the "*ſyſtem of permanence*," with which theſe modern Reformers are

[h] See St. Baſil's noble refuſal to abandon *ſuch* prejudices to Eunomius. Lib. i. p. 201. edit. Steph.

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ſo offended, ſhall have taught us to reverence and reſpect the ſacred writers, this is no prejudice that can ſtand in the way of truth. It is eaſy to call Moſes a *mythologiſt*, and the Prophets *viſionaries*; but nothing can be more difficult than to *prove* them ſuch. The Bible is a book which claims to be judged of in a manner very different from the way too generally adopted; not in detached parts, nor as a *common* hiſtory, but as a record of events peculiarly connected in themſelves, and peculiarly diſtinguiſhed from any modern events, by every circumſtance of time, place, cuſtom, religion, and politics. It *profeſſes* to be a *marvellous* account; this is its very *pretenſion:* but if *allegory* is to be turned into *fact*, and *fact* into *allegory*, at any man's pleaſure, there is no end to the confuſion it muſt occaſion. The fruit of the tree of knowledge has been of late, more raſhly than ever (12), reſolved into an allegory, and the real *origin* of *ſin* thus reduced to a fable; while the *figurative* and *typical* repreſentations, whereby the Prophets were inſtructed in the courſe of future tranſactions, have been expoſed and ridiculed as *real* events; and this (in more inſtances than one)

one) in *direct contradiction to the Prophets' own words* ([13]).

Prejudices are not always *errors*, though a foreign writer of ſome eminence has endeavoured to identify them ([14]). Prejudices may be very valuable principles [i], and none more ſo than the prejudices of a public education; a circumſtance which ſeems to have been acknowledged by the reformers themſelves, who have not neglected the aid of *national* and *revolutionary ſchools*, to give effect to their own boaſted ſyſtems of *Truth* and *Reaſon* ([15]).

The divine authority of the *Old* Teſtament, through a weak ſpirit of accommodation and conceſſion which has ſeized upon ſome minds, has lately been as much in danger from the *treachery* of *friends*, as from the aſſaults of enemies. We have been admoniſhed by a *miniſter* of *Chriſt's Church* to lay aſide all "*theological prepoſſeſſions*," concerning the *divine legation* of Moſes, and *inſpiration* of the Prophets, for purpoſes as diſgraceful to the ſcholar, as the Chriſtian; to accommodate ourſelves to the objections of Freret,

[i] See Notes to *Parr's Spital Sermon*, p. 102.

Bolingbroke,

Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Boulanger, Diderot, and Paine; ſo, ſays he, that we need no longer fear "*the erudition*" of the firſt, "*the ſenſe*" of the ſecond, "*the wit*" of the third, "*the ſcurrility*" of the fourth, "*the declamations*" of the fifth, or "*the ſarcaſms*" of the laſt! One would ſcarcely conceive, after ſuch a propoſal as this, that it could be to the *Old* Teſtament, that Chriſtianity makes her firſt appeal, and ſends us for her chief credentials. No prejudices whatſoever in favour of Moſes and the Prophets, which we ſhall have derived from our forefathers, or imbibed by education, need be ſuſpected of biaſſing our judgments improperly; for it ſhould be remembered, that when Chriſtianity *firſt* made this appeal, ſhe was under perſecution, and it was her *future* eſtabliſhment that depended on the iſſue[k]. Every prejudice which is now thought to favour the Church, and to give an imaginary importance to the evidence of Scripture, was *then* againſt her: it was not the appeal of numerous adherents, connected by the leaſt ſhadow of temporal intereſt, but it was the appeal of Chriſt *crucified!* of impaled and

[k] See *Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ*, p. 197. fol. edit.

impriſoned

impriſoned apoſtles! of a few wandering outcaſts! of dying martyrs! and yet ſhe *prevailed!* Her credentials were examined and admitted; the appeal was proſecuted, the prophecies were ſearched, and the Church increaſed daily! And ſhall this evidence be *now* diſputed? Shall we be told, that it is incomplete, and muſt be perverted to be made to apply? The appeal is ſtill open. It is a curious and intereſting enquiry; but in entering upon it, let it be thought *no prejudice*, but a meaſure both equitable and juſt, to approach theſe extraordinary records with reverence and reſpect; remembering that if the preſent exalted ſtate of the Chriſtian Church, in theſe realms, has rendered them ſuſpicious to her adverſaries, the firſt appeal was made when the Church was in diſgrace; when the power of the mighty, and the wiſdom of the wiſe, were againſt it; when the evidences referred to were only in the hands of a deſpiſed and perſecuted people, while the appeal was propoſed to the whole world ([16]); to the might and majeſty of ancient Rome, the learning and philoſophy of Greece, to the infatuations of the Jew, the corruptions of the Pagan. Theſe were

were the firſt to whom the evidence was offered; and I know not what advantage any can expect to gain by decrying thoſe prejudices (17), and that "*ſyſtem* of *permanence*," which lead us to reſpect theſe ſacred writings; except indeed, which is ſurely the truth, they would turn us entirely aſide from the conſideration of them; for if the preſent prejudices of reſpect and veneration were laid down, and the very worſt prejudices of the ancient pagan world aſſumed in their ſtead, even againſt *theſe* Chriſtianity *has* prevailed, and is entirely competent to do ſo ſtill.

We appeal then with renewed confidence to the *canon* of *Scripture*. It is open alike to believers and unbelievers. We appeal from Chriſtianity to Moſes and the Prophets, becauſe their evidence, when duly examined and conſidered, is in itſelf miraculous. No "ſyſtem of permanence," no prejudices or prepoſſeſſions concerning the divine authority of the Hebrew writers, need ſtand in the way of the full diſcovery of truth, if the caſe is to be decided by fair reaſoning, regular argument, and ſound criticiſm. The common plea, that, under ſuch circumſtances, Reaſon

(that

(that is always, Reaſon as oppoſed to Revelation) cannot obtain a hearing, may not any longer with propriety be urged. Reaſon has ſurely *now had* her hearing. I cannot conceive that Infidelity or Atheiſm could ever find more to ſay, than is to be found in many productions of this age of *Reaſon*, or that they could ever have a better opportunity of being heard: a circumſtance which the author of the *Ruins of Empires*, as free a writer, and as adventurous a critic, as any the age can boaſt, ſo fully acknowledges, as to glory in the *impoſſibility* of any idea being any longer effectually ſuppreſſed, either by the interpoſition of power, or the influence of authority ([18]).

We may ſurely hope then, that this age of *freedom* will have put us in poſſeſſion of every objection that can be urged againſt Chriſtianity, ſince, by the confeſſion of Infidels themſelves, notwithſtanding the continual outcry againſt *prejudices*, and the undue influence of authority, we find that they have been able to promulgate their ſentiments without reſtraint and without fear. And indeed their *works* will prove it. Their works will amply ſhew, that, contrary to the aſſertion

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tion of the very author whoſe complaints I have had particular occaſion to notice in this diſcourſe, *few* have "refrained, through fear "of perſecution, from the publication of *un-* "*palatable* opinions, or felt *compelled* to pub- "liſh ſuch opinions in a *frigid* and *ænigma-* "*tical* ſpirit [1]."

[1] *Godwin's Pol. Juſt.* b. iv. c. 6.

NOTES TO SERMON II.

Page 58. *note* (1).

MAY in this late conteſt have appeared more critical than in former ones.] It is enough for us to know that it has *appeared* ſo to thoſe who have been moſt active in their oppoſition to revealed Religion. The more confident their expectations have been, the more conſpicuous and deciſive muſt be the triumph of Revelation. Now whatever becomes of the queſtion, whether the French revolution was owing or not to the *conſpiracies* of the *Free-Maſons* and *Illuminati*, as ſtated by the Abbé Barruel and Profeſſor Robiſon, I can feel no difficulty in referring to their very curious publications, as well as to the work, entitled, *Mémoires pour ſervir à l'Hiſtoire du Jacobiniſme, par M. l'Abbé Barruel*, in proof of the critical ſtate in which Chriſtianity was ſuppoſed to be by all the Deiſtical and Atheiſtical writers, whoſe profeſſed object was, *de faire valoir la Raiſon.*" (See *Weiſhaupt's Letters* under the name of *Spartacus*.) It is impoſſible not to ſuppoſe, from the ſtyle and character of the books circulated and recommended throughout Europe at that time, that the progreſs of *Reaſon* was *expected* to give the finiſhing ſtroke to *Chriſtianity*, not merely as an *eſtabliſhed* Religion, but as a *revealed* Religion. The ſtate of things at that time is well deſcribed by Profeſſor Robiſon in his Account of the German Union. "The freedom of enquiry," ſays the learned Profeſſor, "was terribly abuſed; (for what will the "folly of man not abuſe?) and degenerated into a "wanton licentiouſneſs of thought, and a rage for ſpe- "culation and ſcepticiſm on every ſubject whatever. "The ſtruggle, which was originally between the Ca- "tholics and Proteſtants, had changed, during the gra- "dual progreſs of luxury and immorality, into a conteſt

" between *Reaſon* and *Superſtition*. And in this conteſt " the denomination of *Superſtition* had been gradually " extended to *every doctrine which profeſſed to be of di-* " *vine Revelation*, and *Reaſon* was declared to be for *cer-* " *tain* the *only* way by which the Deity *can* inform " the human mind." *Robiſon's Proofs*, p. 278. 3d edit. This perhaps is as correct and as unprejudiced an account as could be given of the ſpirit of the times; and whatever ſhare theſe Infidel writers may have had in the *political* diſturbances that enſued, there can be no doubt that their confidence of ſucceſs againſt *Chriſtianity* muſt have been much increaſed by the progreſs of the *French* Revolution, and the overthrow of the *Gallican* Church. What advantage they *really* expected to derive from the advancement of *knowledge*, it may be difficult to ſay; but many of them ſeem principally to have fixed upon *phyſiology* in its different branches, as moſt likely to afford the ſtrongeſt proofs againſt the divine authority of the Bible. Voltaire was for making *phyſics* the touchſtone of all pretended revelations. Speaking of the Koran, he ſays, " On y voit " ſurtout une ignorance profonde de la *phyſique* la plus " ſimple et la plus connue—c'eſt là la *pierre de touche* des " livres que les *fauſſes Religions* prétendent écrits par " la Divinité." It is not to be queſtioned that M. de Voltaire meant in many of his writings to apply this touchſtone to the holy Scriptures, with a confidence in its efficacy to reduce *them* to the ſtandard of the *falſe* Religions he *pretended* to have in view. It is ſome ſatisfaction ſurely to be able to refer to ſuch advocates for Revelation as Grotius, Bacon, Selden, Puffendorf, Paſcal, Newton, Boyle, Locke, Addiſon, &c. when he adds, " le *vulgaire*, qui *ne voit point ces fautes*, les *adore*." Nothing can be more difficult than to teach modeſty to a *minute* philoſopher. This age of Reaſon has produced many in our own nation, who have pronounced opinions, to be not only indefenſible, but poſitively abſurd and irrational, which were unqueſtionably entertained, and publicly avowed, by the truly learned men whoſe names I have juſt mentioned: ſee for inſtance the writings of Dr. Toulmin, whom I ſhall have occaſion to notice elſewhere. Mr. Gibbon has ventured to inſinuate, that the reaſon of *ſuch* men was *ſubdued*, rather than *ſatisfied*.

tisfied. (See chap. xx. of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*) We have only to refer to their works, to see whether they were men likely to have their reason rather subdued than satisfied: it would be well for the reputation of Mr. Gibbon, if even *this* excuse could be alleged for *his* being, as he frequently is, in his works, the *advocate* of *Idolatry*. At all events it may be asserted, that Mr. Gibbon is the first who has thrown such an imputation upon them, and as it is matter of mere conjecture, it may reasonably be passed over; though we cannot refrain from saying, that no eminence which Mr. Gibbon has attained as a writer would dispose us to bow to his authority as a judge of Bacon, Newton, Boyle, &c. and as to his candour and honesty, we shall have more to say of it elsewhere.

To return to the subject we had quitted. Diderot, in his *Système de la Nature*, congratulates himself upon the probable downfal of theology from the advancement of *physical* knowledge. "La *vraie Physique* ne *peut* "qu'amener la ruine de la *Théologie*." Book i. chap. 7. But Mr. Paine goes farther, and even pretends that the point is accomplished. "The system of *a plurality of* "*worlds*," says he, "renders the Christian system of "faith at once little and ridiculous, and scatters it in the "wind like feathers in the air. The two beliefs cannot "be held together in the same mind; and he who "thinks he believes both has thought but little of "either." Mr. Paine pursues this idea at some length. I will venture to say, there is no person who *thinks he believes both* more thoroughly than the writer of this note; and indeed he *has thought a good deal about both*, notwithstanding what Mr. Paine ventures to assert. And had the above passage of Mr. Paine's occurred to him when he published a book expressly upon the subject, (A. D. 1803.) he would have been happy to have referred to it, as the best explanation of his intentions, which were certainly in *one* instance *mistaken*. [See *Critical Review* of the work, entitled, Εἷς Θεὸς, Εἷς Μεσίτης.] The intention of the work was *no other* than to shew, that the holy Scriptures did not *contradict* the notion of a *plurality of worlds*. Upon this subject of the *plurality of worlds*, I shall beg leave to add some references I had not an opportunity of making in the book I have just noticed,

ticed, but which are exceedingly applicable, and would in themſelves be ſufficient anſwers to the dogmatical aſſertion of Mr. Paine. See *Sherlock's XIth Diſcourſe*, vol. i. p. 320. *Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, pp. 354, 355. 8th edit. Introduction to *Dr. Thomas Burnet's book de Fide et Officiis Chriſtianorum* (the extract from the preface found among his papers). *Giſborne's Walks in a Foreſt*, Walk III. *New Theory of Redemption*, publiſhed 1789. vol. ii. p. 79. &c. and *Fuller on Deiſm*, or *The Goſpel its own Witneſs*, Part II. chap. v.

Page 58. *note* (2).

Upon all the ſubjects here enumerated, it is almoſt ſufficient to refer to *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, 5th edition, with an Appendix by Profeſſor Brown, *on the preſent Times*, 1798. I ſhall however ſubjoin the following notices of ſome French works, which, I muſt confeſs, I have had myſelf no opportunity of examining. "M. Bergier a fait pour la France ce que Leland avoit "fait pour les trois Royaumes: il a frappé à grands "coups ſur *le Dictionnaire philoſophique*; *la Philoſophie de* "*l'Hiſtoire*; *l'Examen important*; *le Sermon des Cin-*"*quante*; *le Chriſtianiſme dévoilé*, &c. Perſonne juſqu'à-"préſent n'a réfuté M. Bergier." And again, "M. "Campbell dévoile les ſophiſmes de Hume. M. le "Profeſſeur Caſtillon fit plus; après avoir traduit et "commenté M. Campbell, il reprit en bloc tous ſes ar-"gumens; il en fit, pour ainſi dire, une chaine ſerrée, "il preſſa, il ſomma M. Hume de la briſer, ou de ſe "rendre. M. Hume a gardé un profond ſilence."

Page 60. *note* (3).

Nothing is more common than the revival of *old objections*, with a view to the very probable advantage of their appearing *new* to the *ignorant*; as Cicero ſays in his *Orator*, c. 3. "Ego autem et me ſæpe nova videri "dicere intelligo, cum pervetera dicam, ſed inaudita "pleriſque." It is upon the ſtrength of an "inaudita "pleriſque," that ſo many obſolete objections are continually revived. The learned Profeſſor Jenkin remarks, and with much propriety, though it may not perhaps be univerſally admitted, that it appears from the ſeveral apologies of the Chriſtian Fathers, in vindi-

cation

cation of our Religion, that all was at the very firſt alleged againſt it, which can with any pretence or colour be objected. Vol. ii. 403. Both Euſebius and Jerome declare of Origen's book againſt Celſus, that all objections that ever were, or ever may be, made to Chriſtianity, will find an anſwer in it: ſee the former, *Adverſ. Hieroclem*; and the latter, *Epiſt. ad Mag. Orat. Roman.* See alſo *Leng's Boyle's Lectures*, Serm. V. 127. and the Abbé Houtteville's excellent Diſcourſe on the writers for and againſt Chriſtianity, in which is an admirable account of all the *apologetical* works, as well as of the writings they were intended to confute; and he remarks, that not one of the adverſaries of Chriſtianity ever returned to the charge. [See his account of Euſebius.] I muſt again refer to *Dr. Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, for an account of the ſeveral anſwers and replies that have been made to the numberleſs objections advanced againſt Chriſtianity, and which, no doubt, will be continually repeated. There is not one of Paine's objections in his *Age of Reaſon*, that has not been refuted long ago; ſome of them even by Joſephus in his book againſt Apion. I ſhall make no ſcruple of inſerting the following extract from *Mr. Lackington's Confeſſions*, becauſe I have no doubt but the caſe occurs continually; and thoſe who are not aware of the deception may derive advantage from the hint given them. "I alſo procured a Bible interleaved with blank "paper, and tranſcribed many of the remarks and ob-"jections of Infidel writers to various texts; and oppo-"ſite to ſome texts I even wrote my own objections. "Having had ſuch a long acquaintance with the au-"thors in favour of freethinking, I am able to remark, "that Thomas Paine, and other modern Infidels, in-"ſtead of conſulting the Bible, have copied the objec-"tions to it, from thoſe authors that preceded them, "which objections have been ably anſwered over and "over again, by men of deep learning and great abili-"ty. Thoſe anſwers I, like other freethinkers, ne-"glected to read, until a few years ſince. Now I have "read them, I am aſhamed of having been ſo eaſily "duped, and cheated out of my Chriſtianity." Letter II. publiſhed 1804.

Page 64. note (4).

In *the Divine Legation of Moſes*, vol. iii. p. 420. there is an excellent remark on the hazard the Jewiſh Legiſlator ran in pretending to eſtabliſh the belief of a theocracy, if his pretenſions had been unfounded; for this could not be eſtabliſhed without pretending alſo to an extraordinary and particular Providence: upon which Moſes never makes any ſcruple to inſiſt, by way of giving a proper ſanction to his laws; appealing even to his enemies to judge. "*Their* rock is not as *our* rock, even "our enemies themſelves being judges." Deut. xxxi. 32.

There is nothing that has been more miſrepreſented than the Jewiſh theocracy. Lord Shafteſbury certainly means to allude to it, where he enumerates among the attributes which it is hazardous to aſcribe to the Deity, that of being "favourable to a few though for "ſlight cauſes, and cruel to the reſt." It is in this light that all Deiſts *will perſiſt* in regarding it, though if the very books which record this preference are true, no ſuch objection can lie againſt them; for what is it that they expreſsly tell us, but that God did *not* ſelect the Iſraelites for their "*own ſakes*," but "for his *own* "*holy name ſake*, which had been profaned among the "*heathen?*" Ezekiel xxxvi. 22, 23. ſee alſo Deuteronomy ix. which is ſtrong to the purpoſe. Nor need any other conſtruction be put on the calling of Abraham, in which the whole originated: for though this may ſeem more perſonal and particular, yet there were many moral cauſes leading thereto, and it was undoubtedly the effect of God's foreſight, as is plain from Gen. xviii. 19. If God foreſaw *his* future righteouſneſs and eminent piety, could he not foreſee alſo the iniquity of thoſe nations whom his poſterity were to diſpoſſeſs? could he not foreſee all the abominations which it became ſo neceſſary afterwards to caution the Iſraelites againſt? Leviticus xviii. xix. xx. We do not pretend to enter into the queſtion of God's foreſight upon this occaſion; the difficulties attending it have long been acknowledged: but all theſe difficulties may be ſaid to ariſe, *not* from the *uncertainty* either of *man's free-will* or *God's foreknowledge*, but from the *impoſſibility of denying either:* there

there is no foundation therefore whatever for our doubting of God's foreſight in this particular; and the author of the *Hiſtory of Ancient Europe* (Dr. Ruſſel) might have been ſpared the ſhock, that his feelings ſeem to have ſuſtained in reflecting on the promiſe of a deſirable country having been made to Abraham and his ſeed "*before* the inhabitants had *become idolaters*, and a "prophetic curſe denounced againſt them, *before* they "were a people." See p. 130.

There is no doubt that before *the ſentence was put in execution* they not only were become idolaters, but the moſt execrable of all idolaters, as may be collected from the ſeveral chapters of the book of Leviticus already referred to, and the commentators upon thoſe chapters; Patrick eſpecially. The conduct of the Iſraelites themſelves God particularly expreſſes his foreknowledge of, Deut. xxxi. 21. "For I know their "imagination, which they go about, *even now before I* "*have brought them into the land which I ſware:*" which, if Dr. Ruſſell choſe to refer to the Bible at all, ſhould have had its proper weight with him. And I cannot help adding from the ſame authority, (and the Bible has at leaſt the claim that all other books have, to be allowed to ſpeak for itſelf,) that the evidence of God's foreknowledge was a matter of peculiar importance at thoſe times, as we may ſee by the intimation given us of the general deſign of prophecy, Iſaiah xlviii. 5. "I have even from the beginning declared it "to thee; before it came to paſs I ſhewed it to thee: "*leſt thou ſhouldeſt ſay*, Mine *idol* hath done them, and "my *graven image*, and my *molten image* hath com-"manded them."

As to God's ſelection of the Iſraelites, and how much it has ſince been turned againſt the Deiſts, by their preſent ſtate of depreſſion and diſperſion, (and this in fulfilment of the ancient prophecies,) ſee *Leſlie's Method with the Jews*, 11th fol. edition of his works, vol. i. pp. 71, 72.

Though I have already treated pretty largely of this ſubject in a note to my firſt Diſcourſe; yet, as there is no objection in regard to which Deiſts are more confident in their attacks upon the Jewiſh diſpenſation, I ſhall hope to be excuſed for offering ſome further re-

marks in this place; with references to a few of the authors who have written moſt perſpicuouſly upon the ſubject, and are acceſſible to the generality of readers.

It is raſh in man to attempt to decide what may be cruel, or not ſo, as a diſpenſation proceeding from God. In this mixed ſcene of things there are many evils, which cannot be corrected without the ſacrifice of much preſent eaſe and preſent happineſs. It is always ſufficient for us, in paſſing a judgment upon ſuch events, to be able to diſtinguiſh what will be the actual conſequences. Let us ſuppoſe one man to loſe a limb by violence, and through the malice and revenge of an inveterate enemy; and another by the hand of a ſkilful practitioner, capable of foreſeeing that the loſs of his limb was neceſſary to the preſervation of the reſt of the body, and of life itſelf: could we heſitate to decide, that in the firſt inſtance there would be much to blame; in the laſt, much to be even admired and commended? Shall not the foreſight of the practitioner render *his* an act of kindneſs and benevolence? But as this may not be thought entirely to meet the caſe, let us ſuppoſe a man to be forewarned of his death, unleſs he ſhould ſubmit to the loſs of a limb; would his death, upon his neglect of this notice, be imputable to him who gave him the advice? How the Iſraelites were dealt with in this reſpect, ſee 2 Kings xvii. and Patrick on the chapter. See alſo the exact caſe, Ezekiel iii. 18, 19. ib. xxxiii. 1—9. Conſult alſo *Origen contr. Celſ.* b. iv. p. 211. and b. vi. p. 314. edit. Cantab. and c. xvii. of the *Philocalia* in the ſame edition, p. 104.

I am not pretending to reſemble God's ways to our ways, or his thoughts to our thoughts: but as it is moſt unqueſtionable, that many evil occurrences take place in the world, which the proſpect of good to enſue reconciles to our feelings, ſo we may confidently believe, *a fortiori*, that where there is a conſtant and unerring foreſight of conſequences, many events, accompanied with the moſt terrifying effects to our underſtandings, may not be ultimately bad; and therefore it cannot be poſſible for us to ſay what may be the real nature of any events brought to paſs through the expreſs will of God. It was apparently bad for Joſeph

to

to have fallen under the diſpleaſure of his brethren, and to have been ſold to the Iſhmaelites: but Joſeph lived long enough to draw a different concluſion, for wiſely did he comfort his repenting brethren; "As for "you, *ye* thought evil againſt me; but God meant it "unto good, to bring it to paſs, as it is this day, to "*ſave much people alive*." Gen. l. 20.

It is generally granted, that whatever knowledge the Iſraelites might have had of a future ſtate, ſuch a belief was not ſo prevalent, nor by any means ſo clear, before, as ſince the times of the Goſpel. What *we* know *now* of another life to come, was in a great meaſure wanting in thoſe times. The proſperity of a hardened ſinner therefore is not likely now to do ſuch miſchief in the world, becauſe we well know that there is a time to come, when God's providence will be amply vindicated; but this was not the caſe in the times of which the Bible gives an account. I have already taken notice, not only that the idolatrous nations of old were corrupt in their manners beyond all that we can poſſibly conceive, in our preſent ſtate of refinement and civilization, but that their whole ſyſtem of religion (and policy even) tended to a *defiance* of the ſupreme God. "Who is the Lord," (the God of Iſrael,) ſays Pharaoh, "that I ſhould obey his voice?" Exod. v. 2. This is the clue to the circumſtances of thoſe times; and if we follow up the hiſtory, we ſhall find, I think, that there is ſcarcely one incident, which this matter of *defiance* will not ſerve to explain. The groſs extravagancies of idolatry, the cruel and licentious rites attached to it, are irrefragably confirmed by every teſtimony of profane as well as ſacred hiſtory: and if any men had been bold and virtuous enough to ſtem the torrent of iniquity, and aſſert the inſulted majeſty of the true God, would not Reaſon have been confounded, if they had been entirely abandoned, and no ſupport afforded them on ſo great and glorious an occaſion? We have a right to aſk ſuch queſtions in an age of Reaſon; an age, which has produced one very bold Philoſopher; ſo bold as to argue againſt the very exiſtence of God, from the *preſent reſiſtance* that is *made to him* in the daily *commiſſion* of *ſin* of all ſorts; and this is adduced in argument againſt Dr. Clarke's evidences of God's attributes; particularly

ticularly of his *infinite power*. See *Diderot's Syſtême de la Nature*. Nay, he goes ſo far as to reſt all his arguments againſt the being and providence of God, upon the very fact of *his being ſuffered to exiſt* to publiſh ſuch a work.

We know from Chriſtianity how ſuch acts of defiance may have their due reward in time to come, and the world in general is at all events too enlightened to be ſeduced into *atheiſm* by ſuch attempts. But this was not the caſe in times paſt. Proſperity and adverſity, or rather, proſperous and adverſe ſucceſs in their wars and conflicts, were the only criterions of men's faith. *Whatever object* they choſe to worſhip was acknowledged, in proportion to the temporary ſucceſs that attended their ſeveral undertakings. This was their common mode of reaſoning, as may be collected from every hiſtory we poſſeſs of thoſe remote times. The expreſs interference of God therefore was neceſſary to vindicate his ſupremacy and providence, at ſuch times, upon the Deiſt's, or rather the Atheiſt's own principles; and indeed Diderot leaves us no alternative between the acknowledgment of God's interference on occaſions, and the total denial of his providential government of the world.

The next queſtion then is, How is this interference deſcribed to have happened? Often certainly with moſt dreadful diſplays of God's power in puniſhing; but might there not be *mercy* in this very *ſeverity? Severity* is certainly *mercy* where nothing leſs will be effectual to the ſuppreſſion of ſuch iniquities and abominations, as tend to corrupt and deprave the whole of human nature.

Mr. Gibbon, ſpeaking of Aurelian's puniſhments, [*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. ii. 18.] ſays, "a few *ſuch* examples impreſſed a *ſalutary* conſterna-"tion. His puniſhments were terrible, but then he "had ſeldom occaſion to puniſh more than once the "ſame offence." Here then the principle is fully admitted as *ſalutary* in its conſequences; and that this was the object to be obtained by the Jewiſh laws is evident from Deut. xiii. where, as a reaſon for the ſeverity of the puniſhment denounced againſt idolaters, it is expreſsly ſaid, "And *all* Iſrael ſhall *hear* and *fear*, "and

" and *do no more* any ſuch wickedneſs as this is among " you." So again, ſpeaking of the Canaanites, the Scripture ſaith, " He gave the kingdoms of Canaan to " be an heritage unto his people." Why? That *all* the *nations* of the *world* might know that the hand of the Lord is mighty, and that they might fear the Lord continually: " and they joined themſelves unto Baal-" Peor, and provoked him with their inventions; ſo " the plague was great among them. Then, *being* " *chaſtiſed*, they *turned to their God*." Such was the object of the calamities that were permitted to befal them, and ſuch, no doubt, the means *neceſſary* to reſtrain and to convert them; or at leaſt to prevent the contagion ſpreading; which nothing but the manifeſt correction of idolatry could accompliſh, without intrenching too much on the freedom of the human mind. Much to the ſame purpoſe may be ſeen in the third part of *Dr. Edwards's Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm*; *Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*; (Part II. chap. 2.) *Burthogge on the Divine Goodneſs*; *Nicholls's Conferences*; *Leland's Anſwer to Tindal*; *Owen's Sermons at Boyle's Lectures*; *Bryant on the Authenticity of the Scriptures*; and *Watſon's Apology for the Bible*. In a ſmall work of M. Petitpierre of Neufchatel on the *Divine Goodneſs*, there are ſome good arguments to prove *ſeverity* to be a *main branch* thereof. See alſo *Robert Robinſon's Sermons*, *Diſcourſe on early Piety*, and *Lindſey on Divine Government*. Voltaire, that he may have an opportunity of imputing to the Jews the worſt motives that he could, obſerves, that in order to be convinced that the idolatry of the neighbouring nations was not the true cauſe of their *hatred*, we need only conſult their hiſtory, where we ſhall ſee that they themſelves were frequently idolaters. Nobody denies this; it is what we would particularly inſiſt on: their diſpoſition towards idolatry was the preciſe occaſion of God's ſeparating them from their neighbours with ſo much ſtrictneſs and ſeverity; not to encourage their *hatred* of them, but to keep them from the evil communication of their corrupt notions and practices. " After the doings of " the land of Egypt, *wherein* ye *dwelt*, ſhall ye not do; " and after the doing of the land of Canaan, whither " *I bring you*, ſhall ye not do: neither ſhall ye walk in " *their*

"*their* ordinances. Ye ſhall do MY judgments, and "keep MINE ordinances to walk therein. I am *the* "*Lord your God.*" Levit. xviii. 3, 4. See alſo Levit. xx. 26. And is it not clearly ſhewn in the hiſtory of the Bible, that the Iſraelites were puniſhed for every inſtance of apoſtaſy? Idolatry was carefully pointed out to them as the immediate object of their enmity, whether they choſe to make it ſuch or no; and this they had many opportunities of proving; whenever it turned out *not* to be the object of their deſigns, they were themſelves checked and puniſhed.

But let us conſider, laſtly, the character and conduct of the *Prophets*, for *they* were the principal miniſters of God's diſpenſations. How then are they repreſented as interfering? By expoſing in the ſight of the infidel the error of his way, and upholding the righteous believer by the moſt comfortable encouragements and captivating promiſes. Had they made no pretenſions to a commiſſion from Heaven, we ſhould almoſt have expected a viſible diſplay of God's providence in their favour, ſo commendable was their zeal, ſo important to the *whole world* the object and the courſe of their proceedings. See this amply proved in *Law's Theory of Religion*, Diſc. II. where are to be found abundance of uſeful references. See alſo *Lowman's Diſſertation on the civil Government of the Hebrews.*

I would however willingly be contented to refer to the book of Jeremiah alone, illuſtrated by Dean Prideaux's account of thoſe times, in his *Connection of the Old and New Teſtaments*, to ſatisfy any reaſonable and well-diſpoſed mind, of the goodneſs of Providence, as diſplayed in the miſſion and interpoſition of the ancient Prophets. I would only wiſh the whole caſe to be conſidered, and then let it be ſaid, whether in any inſtance the wicked were puniſhed without ſufficient warning; whether all previous pains were not taken in the caſe of the idolaters, to convert them to the true faith, (Jeremiah li. 8, 9.) in the caſe of the Iſraelites, to preſerve them in obedience; (ſee Jeremiah, ch. vii.) I have offered but two references in proof; but many more might be adduced. It is beſides too often overlooked, that the Iſraelites were particularly enjoined to offer peace to the Canaanites, on condition that they renounced

nounced their falſe Deities, and acknowledged Jehovah for their only God. See Deut. xx. 10. Nor was war to be commenced, till *ſuch terms* had been *rejected*. See a note to *Dr. Henry Owen's 12th Sermon at Boyle's Lecture*, and *Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion*, Part II. ch. ii. It is alſo to be obſerved, that God's conduct towards the Iſraelites was generally known to the Gentile nations, and this alone ought to have operated as a warning. See Numbers xiv. 14, 15. Deut. ii. 25. Joſhua ii. 10. 1 Sam. iv. 10. vi. 6.

Page 65. note (5).

They propheſied of many *facts*; *many* connected *facts: Have any ſuch taken place?*] See the ſeveral diſtinct prophecies relating to our Saviour enumerated and brought together in the *Penſées de Paſcal*, xv. *Leſlie's Method with the Jews*, xii. and his *Truth of Chriſtianity demonſtrated*, p. 140. fol. edit. of his works. They are well ſummed up in *Juſtin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho*, and his *Apology to Antoninus*, and by others of the *apologetical* Fathers. But I ſhall add the following more acceſſible references. *Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs and Certainty of the Chriſtian Religion*, Part II. ch. v. and ch. xii. *Bryant on the Authenticity of the Scriptures*. *Jamieſon on the Uſe of Sacred Hiſtory*, vol. i. part 1. §. 2. and *Fuller's Goſpel its own Witneſs*, Part II. ch. i.

Such an *accumulation* of propheeies, diſtinctly fulfilled, might ſurely have inclined Rouſſeau to truſt a little to their evidence. He requires *three* things to make a prophecy credible, the conjunction of which he conceives *impoſſible*. Firſt, that we ſhould be witneſſes to the prophecy; ſecondly, to the accompliſhment of it alſo; and thirdly, that it ſhould admit of *demonſtration*, that the prophecy and event could not have coincided by *any* accidental circumſtances. See his *Emile*, tom. iii. 103.

Could Rouſſeau imagine a prophecy more credible, if accompliſhed in the very lifetime of the prophet, than ſix or ſeven hundred years after his death? Could he think that he did juſtice to the evidence of prophecy, by reſting its validity on one individual inſtance of a prediction verified by the event? That *one* prophecy might be accidentally verified is no argument one way

or

or the other. This is what none would deny: but *one* prophecy may, by the addition of *circumſtantial marks*, be multiplied into many. That the Jews ſhould be diſperſed might have been accidentally fulfilled; but that they ſhould be ſcattered and ſifted among the nations, without head or government, be a by-word and a reproach, and that this diſperſion ſhould take place at a time and after a manner marked and ſpecified by the cleareſt notices, this muſt not be called *one* prophecy, though it relates to *one* event. See *Hurd on Prophecy*, Serm. iv. p. 111. and *Prideaux on Daniel's Prophecy*, in the 1ſt vol. of his *Connection* &c. See alſo *Jortin's Diſcourſes on the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion*, p. 177. note, 2d edit.

Such prophecies as theſe are not individual predictions in any ſenſe of the word, and therefore *ſuch* a prophecy as Rouſſeau would diſpute the truth of, any body elſe would alſo. He totally paſſes over the evidence *we* depend upon; namely, an *accumulation* of *many ſucceſſive* prophecies, uttered by *many different* prophets, "at ſundry times, and in divers manners," moſt circumſtantially fulfilled, though marked by various deſignations of time, place, and perſons.

Mr. Paine, in the firſt part of his *Age of Reaſon*, has a curious way of getting rid of the proof from prophecy. He tells us, in his great wiſdom, that we miſtake the meaning of the name; that the Jewiſh Prophets were not altogether the foretellers of future events, or rather, that they were *merely* "*poets*, and therefore," ſays he, "it is altogether unneceſſary to offer any obſervations upon what thoſe men, *ſtyled Prophets*, have written. The axe goes at once to the root, by ſhewing that the original meaning of the word has been miſtaken." According to this very wiſe argument, no poet could be a prophet, no prediction could be expreſſed in poetical numbers. We are happy to reflect, that Biſhop Lowth thought otherwiſe, and that he was quite as competent as Mr. Paine to judge of the original meaning of the term uſed for a prophet.

It is ſhocking to ſee ſuch attempts made to deceive the unlearned, and they cannot be too often pointed out, though otherwiſe quite beneath our notice. See Mr. Paine well expoſed for his attack upon the ancient pro-

prophecies, in *Fuller's Gospel its own Witness*, to which I have often had occasion to refer, and which is an excellent antidote to the poison of modern Deism.

Page 66. note (6).

See Dr. Geddes's Introduction to his *Version of the Pentateuch*, where is the following extraordinary passage: "On the whole then, I think it may be laid down "as an axiom, that the bulk of Christians, whether "Papists or Protestants, cannot be said to have a ratio-"nal faith, because their motives of credibility are not "rational motives, but the positive assertions of an as-"sumed authority, which they have never discussed, "or durst not question: their religion is the fruit of "unenlightened credulity. A *very small number* of *cu-"rious and learned men* only have thoroughly exa-"mined the motives of their religious belief, in any "communion; and it will be found, I presume, that "the more curious and learned they were, the less "they generally believed. Hence perhaps the old "adage, *Ignorance is the mother of Devotion.*" pp. 5, 6. Mr. Gibbon had no better excuse to make for Newton, Boyle, &c. being believers, than that their reason was rather subdued than satisfied. He was willing to acknowledge that otherwise they were *great men*, as generally reputed to be. But Dr. Geddes *presumes* farther. Notwithstanding the great reputation of the believers alluded to, for *learning* and useful *curiosity*, he would insinuate, that infidelity could be the only proof of either; and proposes a criterion, which would leave Bacon, Newton, Boyle, Locke, and numberless others that might be mentioned, to take their place in the lowest rank of *plebeian philosophers*. If Ignorance is the only parent of *Devotion*, we could little have expected it to spring up in such soils; still less could we have supposed, that *Devotion* would have furnished many critics fully capable of detecting the errors, into which the learned translator himself had fallen. See the Reviews in general of Dr. Geddes's work; particularly the *British Critic*; *Professor Findlay on the Inspiration of the Jewish Scriptures*; and some very brief but excellent remarks on *Dr. Geddes's Prefaces*, by the Rev. John Earle. London, 1799.

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Page 67. note (7).

See *Lindſey's Hiſtorical View of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine*, &c. London, 1783. It is not the Lecture founded by Mr. Bampton only, but Lady Moyer's Lecture in the metropolis, and "ſome appointments of "the like ſort among Diſſenters," that Mr. Lindſey objects to; and, to take his own account of matters, his objections all proceed from a jealouſy of having the Trinitarian or Athanaſian doctrine (as he conſtantly terms it) ſo generally inculcated. But had any perſon founded a Lecture for *Unitarian* teachers, we may reaſonably conclude Mr. L. would have had no ſuch objections; for in his preface he expreſsly condemns the Univerſities for *diſcouraging* the propagators of ſuch doctrines. "Inſtructors," ſays he, "not of one or two "individuals only, but of ſucceſſive numbers, in a long "ſeries, of ingenuous youth; whoſe wide diſperſion "and various future diſtinction might effectually con-"tribute to ſpread *light* and *truth* through the world." Pref. p. xxiv. It is evident then that Mr. Lindſey thinks it commendable to aſſiſt in the propagation of *light* and *truth*; we have only therefore to claim for Mr. Bampton and Lady Moyer the common right of being allowed to judge what is *light* and *truth*, and their care to propagate them cannot but be highly commendable upon Mr. Lindſey's own principles.

Page 68. note (8).

See *Godwin's Political Juſtice*, chapter on *National Education*. I apprehend Mr. Godwin could never mean, that what has been diſcovered of old ſhould not be inculcated and diffuſed, merely becauſe it was diſcovered of old. He could only mean then, that the diſcovery of new things ought to be more promoted in the Univerſities, and that too great regard is at preſent ſhewn to ancient ſyſtems. To prove this point, it would be incumbent on Mr. Godwin to tell us what branches of knowledge he thinks capable of improvement, and that due aſſiſtance is not provided in the Univerſities for facilitating *ſuch* improvements. Now to ſpeak of Oxford more particularly, public lectures are there read in *Anatomy*, (as important a ſtudy, and where

where diſcoveries might be as valuable, as in any ſcience whatſoever). There are public lectures in *Botany*, *Chemiſtry*, *Mineralogy*, *Aſtronomy*, and *Natural Philoſophy*. And I will venture to ſay, that every one of theſe Lectures is ſo conducted, as not only amply to teach what *has been diſcovered*, but to encourage and aſſiſt every ingenious and attentive ſtudent in proſecuting his own ſtudies, with a view to the further improvement and advancement of the ſeveral ſciences.

So far from any of theſe ſciences being taught on a "*ſyſtem of permanence*," any perſon who will take the pains to enquire may eaſily ſatisfy himſelf, that they are all taught and inculcated as fully upon Mr. Godwin's own favourite ſyſtem of *perfectibility*, as he himſelf could in reaſon deſire. And theſe are all ſciences, which we admit are to a certain degree *improveable*.

But Mr. Godwin is not a teacher of any of *theſe* ſciences, nor much intereſted, probably, in *their* improvement. He is a teacher of *Political Juſtice*, of *Natural Religion*, and *Moral Philoſophy*: and *theſe he* thinks improveable, as fully as *we* think the others to be. Political Juſtice we leave to him to advance as much as ever his talents will enable him: we believe it to be well underſtood by our legiſlators in general; and if not advanced to the higheſt degree of perfection, we are certain that our moſt glorious conſtitution has left the door open for any truly practicable improvements, and that any that are really ſuch ſtand a fair chance of being adopted.

As to *Natural Religion* and *Moral Philoſophy*, we muſt beg leave to demur: theſe we look upon as both of them interwoven with the general doctrines of Chriſtianity; and Chriſtianity we believe to be OF GOD. Therefore we look to *no* improvements in theſe two branches of knowledge, [ſee *Hall's Faſt Sermon*, 1804. p. 38. 3d edit.] except ſuch as may be entirely practical. We teach and inculcate *theſe* upon "*a footing of* "*permanence*;" but ſo far from precluding *enquiry* into the principles of either, that every branch of knowledge, requiſite to the due underſtanding of every queſtion connected with them, is particularly taught and particularly inſiſted on, as the fitteſt qualification for academical honours and academical degrees. Mr. God-

win may depend upon it, that the courſe of ſtudies recommended and adopted in the Univerſity at preſent, is capable of rendering any man a fit judge of *his* compoſitions, however ſcientific; and that if they are not received there with the fervour of admiration Mr. G. had been led to expect, it is becauſe, upon examination, they have not been thought deſerving of it.

Mr. Godwin has talents; his books have acquired a name, and conſiderable reputation, and have no doubt been as much read at Oxford as in any other city of the world; and perhaps more read there than any where, if we except Cambridge, and the Iriſh and Scotch Univerſities; in none of which we believe any work of ſuch notoriety and upon ſuch a ſubject would ſtand a chance of being overlooked.

Mr. Godwin will, no doubt, reſort to the favourite plea of prejudice, which we ſhall have to ſpeak of elſewhere; for the preſent we quit this ſubject with a moſt earneſt hope, that none of Mr. Godwin's inſinuations will lead the world in general to ſuppoſe, that *national education* is not as well underſtood in the ſeveral Univerſities of the King's dominions, as by the ingenious, but too often dogmatical and miſtaken, author of *Political Juſtice*, &c. &c.

Page 70. note 9.

Dr. Geddes's beſt hope of introducing his free interpretation of the Bible to public notice is, that it may find readers diſpoſed "to weigh his arguments in "the ſcale of *reaſon*, devoid of *theological prepoſſeſſions*;" and the Doctor is not backward to explain what *theological prepoſſeſſions* he wiſhes removed out of his way; ſuch, in ſhort, as lead us to regard the ſacred writers of the Old Teſtament as any thing better than the "*rude* "*unpoliſhed*" propagators of "*popular traditions* and "*old ſongs*." *Preface*, p. iii. He would have us look upon "the Hebrew Scriptures" as "erroneous, incon- "ſiſtent, and abſurd;" p. xi. as "inexplicable, and "ſometimes ridiculous." p. xiii. Theſe are Dr. Geddes's *preparatives*. The preparative of "*indifference*" I conceive to be recommended by Dr. Prieſtley and Mr. Belſham, in the following paſſages. Speaking of the *converts* to his *own* way of thinking, the former ſays,

ſays, "It cannot be denied, that many of thoſe who "judge ſo *truly* concerning *particular tenets* in religion, "have attained to that cool unbiaſſed temper of mind "*in conſequence* of becoming more *indifferent* to *religion* "*in general*, and to all the modes and doctrines of it." And this indifference to *all religion* he conſiders as "favourable to a diſtinguiſhing between truth and "falſehood." *Diſcourſes on various Subjects*, p. 65. The latter, (Mr. Belſham,) in his Sermon on the *Importance of Truth*, affirms, that "men who are the moſt indiffe-"rent to the *practice* of religion, and whoſe minds "therefore are leaſt attached to any ſet of principles, "will ever be the firſt to ſee the abſurdity of a popular "ſuperſtition, and to embrace a *rational ſyſtem of faith*."

As theſe paſſages have been ſelected before in proof of what they are here applied to atteſt, and as upon that occaſion complaint was made, that the authors had been miſrepreſented, I muſt beg leave to refer to the IVth Letter of the ſecond edition of Mr. Fuller's *Compariſon of the Calviniſtic and Socinian Syſtems*, where the point is diſcuſſed at length.

Page 71. *note* (10).

Rouſſeau (*Emile*, tom. iii. 115.) aſks, why, "if a "*Chriſtian* ſhould be thought to do well by following "the faith and profeſſion of his fathers, the ſame ſhould "not be thought of the *Turk?*" We do not diſpute the inference he would draw; but in endeavouring to convert a Turk, we would maintain, that it is not a right method to begin with ridiculing Mahomet, and laughing at the credulity of his forefathers. Let the Turk reſpect Mahomet as a prophet, and the Koran as true, till the former is clearly ſhewn not to have been a prophet, and the latter is convicted of falſehood and error.

M. Rouſſeau defies "tous les *intolérans* du monde de "répondre à cela rien qui contente un homme ſenſé." We join with him, and claim no more for ourſelves than what he would claim for the Turk: that prejudices, which are really groundleſs and hurtful, ſhould be removed, not by clamour, mockery, and contempt, but by ſober reaſon and irreſiſtible arguments.

Page 72. *note* (11).

In the *Jacobin* club at Paris, the members were ſworn to denounce to the club every man who ſhould oppoſe *its decrees*, whether friend or relation, father, mother, ſiſter, or brother.

Page 74. *note* (12).

The fruit of the tree of knowledge has been of late, more raſhly than ever, reſolved into an allegory.] The cloſe connection to be traced between the *redemption* and the *fall* of man, had long ago determined all ſincere Chriſtians to reſiſt every attempt to allegorize this moſt important hiſtory; not to ſupport their own private opinions and particular tenets, but for a reaſon that no true Chriſtian could be ſuſpected of diſregarding; namely, the ſolemn references made to it as to a true hiſtory by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 1 Tim. ii. 13, 14. and by our bleſſed Lord and Saviour himſelf, Matth. xix. 4, 5. But according to Dr. Teller of Berlin, and other foreign expoſitors, theſe references were only to mere "*fragments of ſome unknown writer*;" "*Egyptian* or *Chaldean fables*." According to Dr. Geddes, only to "*an ingenious piece of ancient mythology*;" "*popular traditions, and old ſongs!*" See Note 1.

Page 75. *note* (13).

Have been expoſed and ridiculed as real events, &c.] M. de Voltaire pretends to believe, that Ezekiel eat the roll of parchment *in reality*, which the Prophet expreſsly aſſerts to have been a mere viſion. See *Lettres de quelques Juifs Portugais*, &c. where is much more to the ſame purpoſe. He even, through a wanton deſire of expoſing the Jews, affirms boldly, that they were *Anthropophagi*, and cites to this purpoſe Ezekiel xxxix. 17, 18; from which paſſage it is impoſſible not to be able to collect the expreſs views of the Prophet, which had no relation whatever to *men*, but to the *fowls of the air*, and the *beaſts of the field*, as repreſented in viſion, and by a moſt ſublime figure.

Page

Page 75. *note* (14.)

See "*Les Préjugés Détruits*," by F. M. Lequinio, Paris, 1793. To prove his point of prejudices being *errors*, he remarks, that, like the prejudices in favour of *aſtrology* and *ghoſts*, "the prejudice of *nobility* was ge-"neral throughout France three years ago; *now* it is "*perfectly annihilated* by a *decree*." What would M. Lequinio now ſay of the *prejudice* for *royalty*, which alſo ſome years ago was thought to be *perfectly annihilated* in France, by *many* different *decrees*?

Page 75. *note* (15).

It is remarkable, that M. Dupont's famous ſpeech in the National Convention at Paris, 1792, in which he declared himſelf to be an *Atheiſt*, had for its principal ſubject the inſtitution of public ſchools for the education of youth; and he particularly expreſſes a hope in his ſpeech, that a crowd of diſciples from all parts of Europe would flock to partake of the inſtructions of French Atheiſts, and that theſe "*young* ſtrangers, im-"bibing ſuch principles, on their return to their re-"ſpective countries, might ſpread the ſame lights, and "operate, for the happineſs of mankind, revolutions "ſimilar to that of France, throughout the world." Have we not reaſon to rejoice in having rejected *ſuch* ſyſtems of *perfectibility*? See Mrs. Hannah More's remarks on this ſpeech, p. 24.

M. Volney's *Law of Nature*, or ſequel to his *Ruins of Empires*, was called *The Catechiſm of a French Citizen*. I am very ſorry to ſay I have an *Engliſh* tranſlation of this book, in which the title is propoſed to be changed for *The Catechiſm of good Senſe and good People*. I have carefully read it, and find much in it that is contrary to *common* ſenſe, and much that is entirely oppoſite to *truth*.

Page 77. *note* (16).

While the appeal was propoſed to the whole world.] Upon the word *appeal* it has been well ſaid by Dr. Jenkin,

vol. i. 309, that " the hiſtory of Chriſt, (many of the " moſt conſiderable things being done in the ſight of " enemies,) though an *hiſtory* to future ages, was ra- " ther an *appeal* to that very age, whether the facts " were true or not." And again, vol. ii. 403. " Our " religion appeared in a time the moſt unlikely for an " impoſture to paſs undiſcovered, and therefore the " moſt ſeaſonable for truth to manifeſt itſelf; ſince that " muſt needs be true, which neither learning, nor pre- " judice, nor vice, nor intereſt could prove falſe." As to the obſtacles in the way of the firſt promulgation of Chriſtianity, ſee them well ſummed up in *Saliſbury's Tranſlation of Bullet's Heathen Teſtimonies*, pp. 127, &c.

Page 78. *note* (17).

Before we are led to abandon the faith of our fore-fathers, in conſequence of the clamour of the times againſt *prejudices*, we ſhould do well to conſider St. Auſtin's account of his being ſeduced into the error of the Manichees. " Quid enim aliud me cogebat, an- " nos fere novem, *ſpreta religione* quæ mihi *puerulo* a " *parentibus* inſita erat, homines illos ſequi et diligen- " ter audire, niſi quod *nos ſuperſtitione* terreri, et fidem " nobis *ante rationem imperare* dicerent. *Se* autem, nul- " lum premere ad fidem, niſi diſcuſſa et enodata veri- " tate: Quis non his pollicitationibus alliceretur? *Aug. de Utilitate credendi*, cap. 1.

Page 79. *note* (18).

Helvetius makes the following remarks on the times. " Ce ſiècle eſt, dit-on, le ſiècle de la Philoſophie. " Toutes les nations de l'Europe ont en ce genre pro- " duit des hommes de génie: toutes ſemblent aujourd'- " hui s'occuper de la recherche de la Vérité. Mais " dans quel pays peut-on impunément la publier? il " n'en eſt qu'un; c'eſt l'Angleterre." After this was written, all reſtraints were taken away abroad, while England had the good ſenſe to interpoſe ſome ſalutary checks. Nevertheleſs, *Infidel* Reaſon had her hearing in all countries. I queſtion whether Atheiſm could

ever

ever have more to urge than is to be found in Diderot's *Syſtême de la Nature*, or infidelity and blaſphemy more than we have in Mr. Paine's *Age of Reaſon*, which, however ſuppreſſed by public authority, was long enough extant for examination, and has been accordingly moſt ably and repeatedly anſwered.

SERMON III.

2 ESDRAS iv. 12.

Then ſaid I unto him, It were better that we were not at all, than that we ſhould live ſtill in wickedneſs, and to ſuffer, and not to know wherefore.

WE cannot wonder that the origin of evil ſhould in all ages have been a ſubject of moſt curious and anxious enquiry. That an imperfect work ſhould come from the hands of a perfect Being muſt always have ſeemed to imply a contradiction; and yet ſuch is the conſtruction we are compelled to put upon the preſent appearances of things. The exiſtence of God, few, if any, can poſſibly doubt; and the exiſtence of evil, both moral and phyſical, none can pretend to deny. To make God the immediate author of evil cannot fail to ſhock every thinking mind; and yet, to refer it to any cauſe independent of God, muſt needs be ſtill more repugnant to

our

our feelings. And what comfort can there be in either caſe? If God is the author of evil in this world, why not in other worlds[a]? If now, why not for ever and ever? If there exiſts any independent cauſe of evil, how is the world ever to be ſet free from its tyranny? (') If the exiſtence of evil is indiſpenſably neceſſary, how is this neceſſity ever to be overcome?

There can be no comfort then derived either from the Manichean ſcheme of two principles, or the Platonic doctrine of the neceſſary imperfection of matter, both of which long ſurvived the introduction of Chriſtianity, and were, as is well known, the leading features in moſt of the oriental, and even later, hereſies. In either ſyſtem, it is true, there is an appearance of reverence for the Deity, which may ſeem to extenuate its errors. In regard to the laſt more particularly, matter is ſo diſtinct from, and ſo incapable of compariſon with, any purely ſpiritual exiſtence, that perhaps of all philoſophical gueſſes concerning the origin of evil, it was the leaſt offence to refer it to

[a] See *Law's Theory of Religion*, p. 240.

matter,

matter, as ariſing from the very neceſſity of its ſubordinate and imperfect nature: but if matter is *ſo incapable of perfection* as to be the very *cauſe* of *evil*, what are we to think, not of this preſent ſtate only, but of any future one? for neither Reaſon nor Revelation will teach us that matter is to be annihilated. From Revelation we learn the very contrary; for though we read that the preſent "heavens and earth ſhall paſs away," we are yet taught to expect "a new heaven "and a new earth[b]." Though we read that this "corruption muſt put on incorruption, "and this mortal immortality[c]," yet we are taught to believe that there will be a reſurrection of the *fleſh*, on purpoſe that "every "one may receive the things done in his "*body*."

Reaſon will ſcarcely teach us that matter will be annihilated; for Reaſon, unenlightened by Revelation, has been led to deny the very poſſibility of its non-exiſtence, and conſequently of its creation. We have no proof then, that I can find, of any eſſential evil inrent in matter; an opinion, which led the

[b] 2 Peter iii. 12, 13. [c] 1 Cor. xv.

Gnoſtics

Gnoſtics to deny the reſurrection of the body: of its *ſubordination* to ſpiritual ſubſtances, a right apprehenſion of the diſtinction between our own ſouls and bodies ought ſufficiently to aſſure us; though philoſophical proofs without number of this *ſubordination, inferiority,* and *dependence* of matter are certainly not wanting. Subordination however does not neceſſarily imply poſitive imperfection; a miſtake which lies at the foundation of another eminent ſolution of the origin of evil, that I mean of *a ſcale of Beings,* and which has undoubtedly a ſimilar tendency to preclude all hope of future improvement[d].

But to return. The difficulties attending this great queſtion are obvious enough; and indeed the exiſtence and attributes of God, the immortality of the ſoul, the origin of evil, and the removal of its effects, all involve queſtions, concerning which any truly wiſe and modeſt man would not only deſire, but I may certainly add, *expect* alſo, to be ſupernaturally informed.

While the reſt of the Pagan world were

[d] *New Theory of Redemption,* vol. ii. 165. 229.

eager

eager to follow their own inventions, Socrates and Plato could acknowledge the blindneſs of human nature, and the neceſſity of a divine inſtructor: and ſo ſuperior did Cicero eſteem their judgment to be in all ſuch matters, that he expreſſes a degree of indignation at the very thought of the name of philoſopher being beſtowed on thoſe ſelf-ſufficient reaſoners, who pretended to ſee further than the two great Sages of ancient Greece[e]. But may we not with ſtill greater propriety diſpute the wiſdom of ſuch as yet refuſe to be enlightened by the truths contained in the ſacred writings? for, in regard to the origin of evil in particular, it muſt be evident, that if the Scriptures are of any authority, all the difficulties above enumerated are ſolved at once.

God is there repreſented as the author of evil, in the only ſenſe in which it is poſſible he ſhould be; as allowing the *poſſibility* of evil, that man might enjoy the ineſtimable gift of free will. From the abuſe of free will in a being of a higher order, we have intimation of an *oppoſing* principle, but of

[e] *Tuſcul. Diſput.* lib. i. 23. See alſo lib. iii. 1.

no independent one (z). As ſoon as we hear of him in the Bible, we read of his dependence on the Supreme, his ſubjection to his irreſiſtible power and will. As ſoon as we read of him as an enemy to our nature, we have intimation of God's protection againſt him. And it is the ſame in regard to *earthly* things: as ſoon as we read of the introduction of evil, and the corruption of matter, and the diſſolution of the body, we have intimation of a remedy; we are taught to regard them not as evils of neceſſary permanency, but as recoverable and temporary.

But this beautiful and ſatisfactory ſolution of all our doubts and difficulties, concerning the origin of evil, being by the author of the Pentateuch neceſſarily expreſſed, not *fabulouſly*, μυθικῶς, but yet, ἐν μύθου σχήματι [f], as it were, in terms and deſcriptions ſo little correſpondent to preſent experience, as to *reſemble* fable more than fact; it has been one of the conceſſions moſt peremptorily demanded of us of late, that we ſhould agree to acknowledge it to be no better than a mythological repreſentation of things, a de-

[f] *Ariſtot. Metaphyſ.* βιβλ. ιʹ. κεφ. ηʹ. in fine.

ſcription

ſcription " merely imagined to account for " known phænomena."

That there is an air of mythology runs through the Moſaic account of the geneſis, and fall of man, it would be quite unneceſſary to deny; for how could the relation of ſuch events be kept free from the *marvellous?* (3) Who could expect to have the creation, the origin of man, and the origin of evil, deſcribed as facts at all familiar to us? Muſt not they all be events ſo impoſſible for us to have any preſent experience of, that as far as fable is beyond the bound of experience, ſo far the utmoſt truth in ſuch a hiſtory muſt have a fabulous caſt. The world is eternal or created; if created, its creation muſt have been prior to all the ordinary proceſſes of nature. Man and other animals and vegetables were always propagated according to the preſent mode, (which would appear to be a phyſical impoſſibility,) or the act of creation preceded this method, and muſt have been extraordinary and miraculous. Evil was always in the world, and the whole viſible ſcene of things imperfect from eternity, or there muſt have been a period for its introduction, adequate cauſes lead-

leading thereto, and reaſonable grounds for its exiſtence.

It was the deſign of Celſus, as Origen tells us[g], to attack Chriſtianity through Judaiſm; that, by invalidating the authority of Moſes and the Prophets, he might ſap the foundations on which the Goſpel ſtands. This method has been continually reſorted to ſince by Deiſts and Infidels, but it was reſerved for our own times to ſee theſe ſacred authorities ſlighted and abandoned both by Jews and Chriſtians. It is well known in what terms a celebrated tranſlator has ſpoken of the author of the Pentateuch (4), to the ſurpriſe of all true Chriſtians; and a recent tranſaction on the continent has brought as much diſgrace on the Jewiſh ſynagogue. I allude to an extraordinary memorial preſented to a very conſpicuous member of the Chriſtian church in the kingdom of Pruſſia (5), by ſome Jews; in which, under a hope of bettering their condition in ſociety, they freely offer to renounce all belief in the divine legation and inſpiration of Moſes. As the object in the latter caſe was confeſſedly a

[g] *Origen contr. Celſ.* lib. i. edit. Cantab. p. 17.

worldly

worldly one, I do not mean to dwell on it; beſides that an admirable reply to their ſtrange memoir upon the ſubject has already appeared, and I have no particular information to ſtate as to the event; but in regard to the conceſſions propoſed by the celebrated tranſlator and commentator alluded to, it ſhould ſurely be enough to know that they cannot be acceded to, but in contempt of the poſitive declarations of our bleſſed Lord himſelf.

The ſtrict connection between the Old and the New Teſtaments, between the fall and redemption of man, our Lord himſelf has taught us to acknowledge and maintain (6); and what becomes, (I ſay it with ſubmiſſion,) what becomes of HIS wiſdom, and purity, and excellence, if he could regard with ſo much reſpect what modern Philoſophy has learnt to deſpiſe? His wiſdom, and purity, and excellence, as collected from the hiſtories of his life, I believe none are diſpoſed to diſpute; and in thoſe hiſtories we read that HE declared, that though "one were to riſe from the dead," he could not inſtruct us better than Moſes and the

Prophets[h]. There we read, that to the incredulous Jews our Saviour asserted, that had *they* "believed in *Moses*, they would have "believed HIM[i]." There we read, that upon the most awful and solemn occasion possible, when he had to subdue the last prejudices of his disciples, and to convince them of the truth and design of all that had befallen him, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, beginning at Moses and all the Prophets[k]. Nor is the connection between the two covenants all that is determined by these declarations of our blessed Lord; but it is well to remark besides, since St. Paul's authority has been disputed by the same adventurous critic, in regard to the inspiration of the Jewish canon, that these references of our Saviour establish the point beyond all controversy; for how could Moses and the Prophets have testified of HIM, but by inspiration from heaven[l]?

[h] Luke xvi. 31. [i] John v. 46. [k] Luke xxiv. 27.

[l] See *Earle's Remarks*, p. 62. and *Professor Findlay* on 2 Tim. iii. 16. in answer to Dr. Geddes, published 1803.

In

In what light then can we regard the bold aſſumption of the celebrated tranſlator, that to acknowledge the hiſtory of the fall to be no better than "an ingenious piece of "ancient mythology, and to compare Moſes "to Pilpay and Æſop, is by no means to "weaken the authority of Scripture?" To me it appears, I muſt confeſs, not only that the authority of Scripture would be weakened by ſuch an interpretation, but that if the hiſtory of the fall is by any means capable of ſuch a conſtruction, we might as well be without any Revelation at all. For, as my text expreſſes it, "It were better that we "were not at all, than that we ſhould live "ſtill in wickedneſs, and to ſuffer, and not "to know wherefore."

When we take a Pagan mythology to pieces, we come perhaps to ſomething like the truth. Oſiris turns out to be the ſun, and Iſis the moon; but the ſun and moon are realities, and we are content to reſt where this ſolution of the allegory leaves us. But let the ſerpent ſtand for our unruly appetites, and the tree of knowledge for our conſciences, and what do we learn thence? Still have we to enquire, why have we un-

ruly appetites? why do our conſciences ſo affect us? If the ſerpent is ſuppoſed to be a figure only, for temptations in general, and the tree of knowledge for the fruits and conſequences of ſin, we muſt look further for the literal ſenſe of theſe very things ſo repreſented by allegory: for what could operate as temptations to the Protoplaſts of man? How could compliance with any deſires become ſin? or how could ſin produce pain? Pain of conſcience I mean? We muſt ſtill ſearch for evil, ſuch evil as ſhould induce pain of conſcience, in ſome contradiction to an expreſs law; otherwiſe remorſe of conſcience, and pain, and ſin, are all idle words. So that if theſe repreſentations of Moſes are but figures, they cover no literal truths: if the account of the fall be an allegory, it is an allegory without a key. It may ſeem to explain preſent appearances, while we conſent to call ſin the tranſgreſſion of a law; but without the tree of knowledge there was then no law; without the ſerpent no temptation. Such a law as the Apoſtle repreſents to have been written in the hearts of the Gentiles by the finger of God, would in the caſe of the Protoplaſts have been without

without an object. The reſt of mankind muſt have been born, and civil ſociety eſtabliſhed, and property diſtinguiſhed, before the firſt human pair could have become moral creatures, and then not the whole of the Decalogue could have applied to them. *Before* theſe events, not one law of the Two Tables could have applied to their conditions, as muſt be evident to any perſon capable of reflection[m].

Celſus then was much nearer the truth than he apprehended, when he alleged that the Moſaic hiſtory did not admit of being allegorized, or rather reſolved into allegory[n]; and his learned antagoniſt needed not to have been ſo forward to expreſs his jealouſy, that what was eaſily granted in the caſe of the Egyptian and Grecian mythologies ſhould be denied to the coſmogony and fall, as deſcribed by Moſes: for it is certainly not a fanciful repreſentation of the creation of man, and the origin of evil, that *we want*; but the *exact and poſitive hiſtory of thoſe events*, as the firſt and indiſputable foundations of religious and moral reſponſibility.

[m] Vid. *Theodoretum* περὶ προνοίας, λογ. ι'. p. 250.

[n] *Origen contr. Celſ.* lib. iv.

I know it will ſtill be repeated, that Chriſtianity will anſwer many of its moſt important ends, ſtanding alone. This is certainly true: the exquiſite morality of its precepts and rules of conduct; the annunciation of a future life, where it is believed, will remain for our inſtruction and our comfort. Our Saviour's bright example will remain to animate and encourage us; but the whole that relates to our redemption, in the atonement made for ſin, as a diſpenſation of ſalvation from the foundations of the world, is gone!

Thoſe perſons waſte their time greatly, who would pretend to reduce the queſtion, concerning the utility and neceſſity of Revelation, to a mere queſtion of morals. Our anſwer to ſuch a queſtion is not to be ſought for in any laboured compariſon, too often obtruded upon us, of Chriſtian and Pagan morals, revealed and philoſophical doctrines: the indiſputable ſuperiority of ſanctions and motives, in the caſe of a revealed religion, is entirely ſufficient to meet every objection drawn from the capacity of the human mind, and competency of reaſon, to diſcover a rule of life. In the way of ſpeculation,

tion, we may multiply precept upon precept, and maxim upon maxim; but the will and authority to *enforce* ſuch decrees muſt ſtill be wanting[o].

Redemption from ſin and death is at all events a diſtinct matter; this *muſt* be, if at all, according to *God's own* purpoſes. Reaſon can never prove to a man that he needs no redemption, nor yet can it ever point out to him what will be efficacious to redeem him from ſin and death (7), provided the neceſſity of redemption ſhould be admitted. Here then is a queſtion of utility quite diſtinct from every other; which muſt in no caſe be loſt ſight of, and which begins with the Bible. This is a queſtion, which cannot depend on man's diſcoveries, or his powers of reaſon, but on his feelings and his neceſſities. Let a man be ever ſo perſuaded that he may of himſelf diſcover a rule of life, this further queſtion will ſtill remain; Is this all that man ſtands in need of[p]? Now I will venture to aſſert, that this is a queſtion which

[o] See the Notes to *King's Origin of Evil*, p. 66. Note X. i.

[p] See *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, Letter xxvii. p. 63. 5th edit.

man *cannot* reſolve. In the books of the Old and New Teſtament we read of redemption being neceſſary; man cannot ſay it is not; therefore the utility of the doctrine muſt ſtand or fall with the books in which it is contained. A man's ſaying he needs no redemption cannot poſſibly amount to any argument againſt the *authenticity of the Scriptures;* and if the Scriptures are true, man *does* need redemption, for they ſay ſo.

Morality is of ſo much importance in this life, of ſo much conſequence in a worldly view, that the very worſt of men muſt wiſh, under ſome circumſtances, that the precepts of the Goſpel were of univerſal obligation. As a code of moral laws, therefore, none will be diſpoſed to reject it: but to aſſert, that in the mere morality of the Goſpel conſiſts the whole of Chriſtianity, muſt be either a groſs miſconception, or a moſt perverſe miſrepreſentation of matters ([8]).

The Goſpel *alone may tell* us what we are to do; but it is only in conjunction with the Old Teſtament, from which it never ſhould be ſeparated, that it tells us what we are. Thus connected it gives us that account of the ſpecies, which it would not only be vain,

but

but entirely abſurd to ſeek for otherwiſe. No philoſophical inveſtigation of matters can ever inſtruct us thoroughly either in the origin of man, or the origin of evil. If we will not be informed of theſe matters hiſtorically (9), and I may add, in regard to the creation at leaſt, ſupernaturally, we muſt be contented to be ignorant; and what is more, we ſhould be contented to be ſilent: for ſurely we have great reaſon to complain, when metaphyſicians *pretend* to inſtruct the world upon *theſe* points. If they can prove the Scriptures not to be authentic, they are free to do it; but even this would confer no value on their ſpeculations: moral theories and phyſical theories of the world are equally uſeleſs and precarious, when once we quit the light of Revelation, and the teſtimony of hiſtory. Naturaliſts indeed may ſpeculate on the origin of this viſible world at their will; for we ſhall aſſuredly conduct ourſelves the ſame, whether the globe we dwell on ſhall be thought to have originated from a chaotic maſs, or to have been ſtruck from the ſun by colliſion with a comet: but let us once be perſuaded that evil is inevitable, and that all our actions flow from neceſſity, and the

the conſequences are obvious. And if the time and occaſion would ſerve, I could ſhew at length, that there is no one doubt or difficulty, which formerly ſerved to perplex and embarraſs theſe queſtions and enquiries, from which men have, in this celebrated age, been able to extricate themſelves. We are ſtill diſputing as much as ever, not only about the freedom or neceſſity of human actions, (which will be the ſubject of a future diſcourſe,) but about their moral fitneſs and unfitneſs; the operation and effects of motives; the true diſtinction between ſubſtance and idea; the fallibility of our faculties and ſenſes, even to the doubt, and ſometimes to the very denial, of the exiſtence of matter; though with ſome, on the contrary, *every thing* is material, even the *human ſoul.* If the moral fitneſs and unfitneſs of actions may be thought in any inſtance to be duly determined, ſtill are we left in want of any clear perception of the obligation that is to govern us; for obligation, in the abſtract, is itſelf among thoſe things, whoſe nature, foundation, force, I had almoſt ſaid whoſe very exiſtence has been as much queſtioned by modern metaphyſicians, as any other point whatſoever.

We

We need not then wait for any *Age of Reaſon* to enlighten us upon theſe points; for we may depend upon it, that the further we recede from the firſt beginning of things, the more vain all ſuch reſearches will be. Let us remember what it is we are enquiring after. We do not want to be told that man exiſts, that he is a dependent being, that he is ſubject to both moral and phyſical ills: we require to be informed, not ſo much what man is, as what he has been, and is to be. We want to know, if I may with proper reverence ſo expreſs myſelf, what was in the contemplation of the Creator when he firſt made man; what intimation he gave him of his condition and future deſtiny; or whether any ſuch intimation was ever given (10). We want not to be told, that there is a God above us, and evil around us; but we want to know how theſe are to be reconciled. They will not be reconciled by any meaſures of compenſation and mercy in ſtore, *without further explanation*; for *thus* both compenſation and mercy would ſeem reflections on the Deity, who might have made us ſo as not to ſtand in need of either. If God has ſpoken to us, then compenſation and mercy may

may be brought into the ſyſtem with the moſt glorious effect: but if we are neither aſſured that God has accounted to us for the exiſtence of evil, nor taught us how to exercise the faculties he hath endowed us with; from compenſation for our ſufferings, and mercy for our failings, would be our very birthright, and God would appear a debtor to the work of his own hands [q].

From the account that Moſes has given, we may learn that God, when he made the firſt rational inhabitant of this earth, gave a rational account of his holy will and deſign. He gave a law, when he gave being, and both compenſation and mercy, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, were *firſt* in his divine ſyſtem; for our free will (if not as an inſtrument of happineſs univerſally, yet as the indiſpenſable diſtinction of the high rank we hold in the ſcale (") of being) was compenſation for the poſſibility of evil; and the hopes of redemption from the conſequences of evil, on certain conditions, was mercy.

It is granted, by thoſe moſt diſpoſed to

[q] It is well ſaid by St. Auguſtine, " Non aliquid *debendo*, " ſed omnia *promittendo*, Deus ſe facit *debitorem*."

treat

treat this account as a mythological tale, that even as ſuch it is excellent and incomparable[r]. But if it only ſtood upon the footing of other legends, that have been *invented*, as a noble writer ſays, to ſolve this great difficulty of the origin of evil for the vulgar[s]; if it was entirely unconnected with other facts, and not determined by any circumſtances of time, and place, and perſons, we might be perfectly indifferent as to its truth. But it muſt never be forgotten, that it is accompanied with the hiſtory of the origin of the earth, and of man; that a determinate æra is aſſigned to it by the order and ſucceſſion of the Patriarchal families; that we find it exactly where we ought to look for it; in the oldeſt book extant; in the only book which gives "ſuch a view of "our world, and its inhabitants, and their "affairs, as muſt appear to an eye obſerving "from above, not from the earth; which "gives an account of the original cauſes of "things, the true ſprings of events, and de-

[r] *Geddes's Firſt Preface*, p. xi.

[s] See *Lord Shafteſbury's Moraliſts*, Part I. ſect. 2.

"clares

"clares the end from the beginning[t];" in the only book that pretends to give us an account at all circumſtantial of the firſt of the human race; in the only book, which, ſetting out from a particular period, has any thing like a regular chronology and a regular ſeries of events, to which we may refer, and which we may alſo compare with other exiſting records: laſtly, as it more particularly concerns ourſelves, in the only book to which our Saviour and his Apoſtles ſend us for a juſt account both of the origin of man and the origin of evil.

But beſides what we learn hence of the origin of man and of evil, we are alſo hereby informed of the occaſion of death, and inſtructed in the means of redemption; neither of which could ever be otherwiſe aſcertained, than through the means of hiſtory and revelation: and yet they are ſo neceſſary towards a due comprehenſion of the preſent ſcene of things, and as ſuch are ſo intimately connected with each other, that, without them, all that is now, all that is

[t] *Burgh on the Dignity of human Nature.*

paſt,

paſt, and all that is to come, are equally inexplicable.

For that man may be removed to a ſtate of greater perfection than the preſent, few will pretend to deny: the Deiſt has hopes of immortality, and the Socinian feels aſſured of it. Now a future life of perfect happineſs and immortality involves in it the leading principles of redemption. Why another life, or any removal hence, if this life is perfect already? But if this is not perfect, why is it not ſo? Did God render it neceſſarily imperfect at firſt? How then is he to be expected to grant hereafter what he at firſt withheld? The whole is explained by the Moſaic account. Things *were* perfect, and may be rendered ſo again; and thus, as an acute writer has obſerved, "there is ſo "neceſſary a connection throughout the fa- "bric of redemption, that you muſt either "admit or reject the whole together; there "is no accepting of one part without the "other. The Scripture fully harmonizes with "itſelf in the three particulars of *innocence* "paſt, *depravity* preſent, and *righteouſneſs* "to come; the laſt of theſe eſſentially in-

"volving

" volving both of the preceding ſuppoſi-
" tions."

To conclude: This is the mythology we muſt ſet aſide, if Moſes was a fabuliſt. The good tidings of redemption are to be found in the very beginning of the Bible: there we are inſtructed not ſolely in the origin of evil, of which only *hiſtory*, and certainly not *metaphyſics*, can ever ſatisfactorily inform us; but of redemption from its conſequences, of which *Revelation* alone, and certainly not *metaphyſics*, could ever properly aſſure us. It is not a ſyſtem of philoſophy or religion brought forth from caves or hollow trees; not derived from ſuch deities as Jupiter and Apollo ([12]); not reſting on fanciful conjectures, or ſubtle reaſonings; but an open declaration of *facts*, accompanied with the moſt public and ſolemn appeals to heaven; aſſuming to be derived from that very God, whoſe ſupremacy and providence the Deiſt and the Chriſtian equally acknowledge. Without ſuch an explanation of matters, this world is a myſtery ([13]), which the wicked muſt be left to ſolve and interpret as he pleaſes; while the good will remain without

any

any *certain* hopes of remedy or relief. But the myſtery once ſolved as it *is* ſolved by *this* account; the origin of evil once explained ſo as to ſecure man's hopes, and vindicate God's providence, every difficulty vaniſhes. We know our Maker; we ſee our Judge; and we can comprehend ourſelves.

NOTES TO SERMON III.

Page 106. *note* (1).

IF there exiſts any independent cauſe of evil, how is the world ever to be ſet free from its tyranny?] How very unphiloſophically, to ſay no more, does Rouſſeau ſpeak, when he ſays, "Mais ce monde eſt-il éternel ou créé? "y a-t-il un principe unique des choſes, y en a-t-il "deux ou pluſieurs, et quelle eſt leur nature? Je n'en "ſais rien, et *que m'importe?*" Theſe are queſtions, he adds, "inutiles à ſa conduite, et ſupérieures à ſa Rai-"ſon." *Emile*, lib. iv. vol. iii. p. 40.

Is it of *no* importance to us to be informed whether there exiſts an *independent* cauſe of evil? Let the Manicheans puſh their arguments as far as they pleaſe; let them appear to ſome to be better advocates for the purity and perfection of God, as far as their doctrines are applied to ſolve only the *preſent* appearances of things; yet, what are we to think of futurity?

Mr. Gibbon reckons the following doctrines, which the Gnoſtics borrowed from Zoroaſter, *ſublime* ones; viz. the eternity of matter, the exiſtence of two principles, and the myſterious hierarchy of the inviſible world. *Decline and Fall*, ch. xv. He calls Auguſtin's converſion, alſo, from Manicheiſm, "a progreſs from "*Reaſon* to *Faith*." This may have been ſo, perhaps, as far as Reaſon is to be conſidered as inadequate to acquaint us with the real origin of evil: but if Mr. Gibbon meant to inſinuate, that it was a progreſs from principles conſonant to Reaſon, to thoſe that were not ſo, this we poſitively deny.

Bayle aſſuredly meant to inſinuate no leſs, in his notes to the articles *Manichéens*, *Marcionites*, *Pauliciens*, *Origene*, *Zoroaſtre*, in his critical Dictionary, where he pretends, that to argue againſt *facts* is abſurd; and

therefore, though it ſhould be ever ſo *contrary to Reaſon*, that moral evil ſhould have entrance into a world formed by a Being infinitely good and holy, yet we muſt ſubmit to believe ſo, on the authority of the Old Teſtament, which the Manicheans, as he obſerves, were conſiſtent enough to reject. The axiom, "ab actu "ad potentiam valet conſequentia," is as clear, ſays he, as the propoſition that two and two make four. We grant this, but are far from yielding to the conſequences he would draw. Evil is in the world, we are certain: that God is good and pure, we are alſo certain: therefore the poſſibility of evil obtaining to a certain degree under the providence of a good God, is evident to *us* from the *fact*; but it by no means appears to us to follow from thence, that it would be moſt *reaſonable* to refer the origin of evil to an independent principle of evil, becauſe this muſt for ever preclude us from all expectation of its removal. And as all the arguments which M. Bayle puts into the mouths of the Manicheans (and it muſt be admitted that he does the utmoſt juſtice to their cauſe) tend to the eſtabliſhment of God's moral attributes of goodneſs and purity, it may ſurely admit of a queſtion, whether, to argue philoſophically only, that ſyſtem which provides *for the removal of evil in time to come*, is not much more conducive to the glory of the Deity, than that, which, to account for preſent appearances, excludes all hopes of the melioration of things? Or which, by way of rendering the *preſent* ſyſtem poſſible in the eye of Reaſon, would make it impoſſible for the providence of God to induce a change?

This is the great point to be conſidered, upon a view of the exiſting *facts*; the poſſibility of a *change*. The fact of the exiſtence of evil, both moral and phyſical, is fully admitted by all; but every philoſophical ſyſtem, which refers it to a cauſe independent of God, neceſſarily involves the improbability, or rather impoſſibility, of any change for the better; and muſt derogate more from the attributes of God, than any concluſions to be drawn from the preſent *permiſſion* of evil, with a proſpect of its removal in whole or in part. M. Bayle pretends to exclude all *à priori* reaſonings upon the ſubject; but it is ſurpriſing how continually he

he departs from this ſyſtem. Every argument on the Manichean ſide may reaſonably be conſidered as an argument *à priori*, and chiefly founded on a *petitio principii* of the poſſible exiſtence of *two* principles; whereas, in adopting the plan of reaſoning *à poſteriori*, from the exiſtence of facts, *we* are guilty of no *petitio principii*, in ſuppoſing the exiſtence of a *good* principle; for that is what the Manicheans admit as well as we. His reaſonings againſt the Origeniſts [art. *Origene*, note E. edit. 1738. Baſle] conſiſt entirely of *à priori* arguments, regardleſs of *facts*. For he would inſiſt upon it, that a good God cannot permit evils in any degree, or upon any conditions; though this is incapable of proof *à priori*, and *à poſteriori* the evidence of *facts* is againſt him. He ſays indeed, that the ſtrongeſt arguments of the Manicheans are founded on the hypotheſis of a few being ſaved, and the reſt eternally damned: but the exiſtence of two independent principles implies the neceſſary exiſtence of evils, both natural and moral, to eternity, by the acknowledgment of M. Bayle himſelf, (ſee his *Eclairciſſement* at the end of his Dictionary, p. 630.) and this in direct oppoſition to a perfectly good and pure principle.

Nothing leſs than an *eternal independent* principle of evil would anſwer the ends of the Manicheans, as Bayle argues, art. *Zoroaſtre*, note F. ii. p. 559; becauſe, "quod eſt cauſa cauſæ eſt cauſa cauſati;" therefore, ſays he, if *Arimanius* was a *creature*, then God muſt be the cauſe of evil, by creating Arimanius, the evil principle. We ſhall not ſtop to argue this point with M. Bayle; thoſe who think the queſtion may be decided metaphyſically, may conſult the *Summa* of *St. Thomas*, particularly Part I. Quæſt. xlix. and the 2d article of the ſame queſtion; where he contends, that there can be no firſt principle of evil, as there is a firſt principle of good; becauſe all evil being *defect*, preſuppoſes good as its ſubject. Therefore evil can never prevail over good, becauſe, "deſtructo omni bono, "(quod requiritur ad integritatem mali) ſubtrahitur "ipſum malum cujus ſubjectum eſt bonum." And perhaps this is as good a *metaphyſical* argument againſt two independent principles as any. St. Auguſtin argues much in the ſame way, *De Civit. Dei*, xi. 9. xii.

6. 7. and our learned Barrow ſeems diſpoſed to adopt his reaſonings, vol. ii. Serm. 12. But to return.

We would contend then againſt the Manicheans, and upon M. Bayle's own plan of argument, that all *à poſteriori* reaſoning from *facts* would lead *us* to acquieſce in the ſcriptural account of things, in preference to any philoſophical ſyſtem extant, though they ſhould all proceed upon the principle of not referring the origin of evil to a good cauſe. We have already noticed, in the Diſcourſe itſelf, the tendency of the two other ſyſtems; namely, that of a ſcale of beings, and the eſſential malignity of matter, to preclude all hope of any future extermination of evil; and therefore theſe alſo muſt be conſidered, however well deſigned, as reflecting on the Deity.

Many have been diſpoſed to allow all theſe ſeveral ſyſtems the merit of endeavouring to provide for the honour of God, and to exculpate him, as a Being of purity and perfection, from being the cauſe of evil. But the Manichean ſcheme, of all others, ſeems the leaſt entitled to ſuch indulgence, as precluding all interference of the good principle, except by *compromiſe* and *conceſſion*, (which was Bayle's amendment of the hypotheſis,) and which muſt eſpecially derogate from the honour of God.

The Platoniſts, (as repreſented by Plutarch, who was for eſpouſing their doctrine in preference to that of Heraclitus, in his Ψυχογόνια, cited by Cudworth, b. iv. 6.) though they contended for the eternity of matter, and its eſſential depravity, yet referred the *order* of the world to the *change* wrought on matter by God; Οὐ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος ἡ γένεσις, ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ μὴ καλῶς μηδ' ἱκανῶς ἔχοντος. One ſuch change does not abſolutely preclude a ſecond; ſo that this error leaves an opening for improvement at leaſt, and that through the power and will of God. Indeed the true Platonic idea ſeems to have been, that evil, and that chiefly phyſical evil, is only *neceſſary* in regard to the things of this lower world; [ſee *Max. Tyrius, Diſſert.* xxv.] and that Mind, or God, would in the end get the better of this neceſſity. See *Wiſe againſt Atheiſm*, vol. i. p. 136. and *Cudworth*, as before.

The Gnoſtics, indeed, when they came to blend the phi-

philoſophical notion of two principles with Chriſtianity, generally acknowledged Chriſt to be ſent to overcome the evil principle: [ſee *Moſheim*:] but M. Bayle will not allow *ſuch* Manicheiſm to be reaſonable; he inſiſts upon it, that the evil principle muſt be independent, or God the ſole cauſe of evil, and that Reaſon cannot determine otherwiſe.

The ſyſtem of a ſcale of beings has for its ſupporters, as is well known, the celebrated Archbp. King, and his learned commentator. Pope has illuſtrated it in verſe, heedleſs, as it has been ſuppoſed, of the bad tendency of the principles with which he was ſupplied by Bolingbroke. The objection to this ſyſtem ſeems to be, that it makes evil, both moral and phyſical, *ſo* neceſſary, as to leſſen, if not deſtroy entirely, the probability of a change. For, as an able writer has well remarked, to conſider man *in his depraved ſtate*, as occupying his proper rank in the ſcale of beings, is not only contradictory to the Scriptures, which particularly ſpeak both of a preceding and a future different ſtate of man; but tends to preclude all hope of change, which could not happen upon ſuch principles, without the diſſolution of that very chain of being, and conſequently without injury to the creation. [See *New Theory of Redemption*, book ii. ch. 8.] For as Pope himſelf argues,

" —— on ſuperior powers
" Were we to preſs, inferior might on ours:
" Or in the *full* creation leave a *void*,
" Where, *one* ſtep broken, the *great ſcale's* deſtroy'd.
" From nature's chain whatever link you ſtrike,
" Tenth or ten thouſandth, breaks the chain alike."
Epiſt. I. 243.

This is certainly very hazardous doctrine, when we are taught beſides to believe, that

" *All* ſubſiſts by elemental ſtrife,
" And paſſions are the elements of life.
" The general *order*, ſince the *whole* began,
" Is *kept* in *nature*, and is *kept* in *man*." Ib. 169, &c.

M. Bayle objects alſo, as is well known, to the ſyſtem which refers the origin of evil to the abuſe of free will: but of this we ſhall have more to ſay elſewhere. I ſhall conclude the preſent note by obſerving, that

this circumſtance of a future *change*, and *redemption from evil*, though reaſonably to be expected upon the ſuppoſition of a *good* principle, yet muſt ſerve to evince the poſitive neceſſity of a divine Revelation, while Infidelity and Atheiſm ſtill ſhelter themſelves behind the old argument, as it is expreſſed by one of the moſt modern writers of that deſcription; "Si, malgré ſa bonté toute "puiſſante, Dieu n'a, ni pu, ni voulu, rendre ſes créa-"tures chéries complettement heureuſes en ce monde, "*quelle raiſon* a-t-on de croire qu'il le pourra, ou le "voudra dans un autre?" *Syſtême de la Nature*, ch. vii. Part II.

We anſwer, that God has effectually done away this difficulty, in the Revelation he has been pleaſed to make of his moſt holy will and purpoſes, from the firſt creation of man.

It is the Scripture only that can ſecure us alſo from the revival of the ancient error of the eternity of matter, and its eſſential imperfection; for Rouſſeau fully acknowledges, in his *Letter to the Archbiſhop of Paris*, that if it was not for the Scriptures, he ſhould think this the moſt reaſonable account to be given of things; and he even doubts whether the Scriptures *do* contradict it; for he ſays it depends entirely on the word ברא, which may be miſ-tranſlated. But we have little to do with the word ברא in determining the queſtion concerning the *origin of evil*, if the Scriptures are acknowledged to be of any authority; for they not only diſcover to us the very means whereby evil was introduced into this world, but expreſsly aſſure us, that, previous to the fall of man, every thing upon the earth, or in the ſyſtem, was in its nature GOOD. See Gen. i. 10. 12. 18. 21. 25. 31.

The author of the *Syſtême de la Nature* ſays, "tout "le monde convient que la matiere ne peut s'anéantir "totalement, ou ceſſer d'exiſter." If ſo, the philoſophical notion of the depravity and eſſential imperfection of matter ſtrikes directly at the doctrine of the reſurrection of the body: but, as Origen ſays, the body has not naturally any malignity in it. *Φύσις δὲ σώματος οὐ μιαρά· ἐ γὰρ ἡ φύσις [σώματος] μιαρότητός ἐστι, τὸ γεννητικὸν τῆς μιαρότητος ἔχει τὴν κακίαν. Contr. Celſ.* lib. iii. p. 136. edit. Cantab. Many objectors have conceived, that the reſur-

reſurrection of the body is *denied* by the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. xv. 50. "Now this I ſay, brethren, that fleſh and blood "cannot inherit the kingdom of God." They are well anſwered by Mr. Granville Sharp, in his Treatiſe on the *Law of Nature in Man*, p. 400. Though, as the objection is an old one, a ſufficient explanation is to be found in almoſt every commentary upon the paſſage; and indeed, as Mr. Sharp obſerves, the Apoſtle himſelf explains his meaning in the very next words. It is not the ſubſtance, but the *corruptibility* of the body, that is to be done away.

Page 110. *note* (2).

We have intimation of an oppoſing principle, but of no independent one.] Mr. Paine, in his *Age of Reaſon*, pretends that the Scriptures repreſent Satan as great, if not greater than the Almighty; as defeating by ſtratagem, in the ſhape of an animal of the creation, *all the power and wiſdom of the Almighty!* as having compelled the Almighty to the direct neceſſity either of ſurrendering the whole of the creation to the government and ſovereignty of Satan, or of capitulating for its redemption by coming down upon earth, and exhibiting himſelf upon a croſs in the ſhape of a man: as making the tranſgreſſor triumph, and the Almighty fall!

Diderot, in his *Syſtême de la Nature*, reſembles the oppoſition between Jehovah and Satan to the ſtruggles between the good and evil principles of the ſeveral heathen nations: "à cauſe de tant d'effets oppoſés qu'on "vit dans la nature, on admit pendant long-temps plu-"ſieurs dieux. Telle eſt ſur-tout l'origine du dogme "ſi ancien et ſi univerſel des deux principes. Voilà la "ſource des *combats* que toute l'antiquité ſuppoſe entre "des dieux bons et méchans, entre Oſiris et Typhon, "Oromaſde et Arimane, Jupiter et les Titans, *Jehovah* "et *Satan*." M. Holland, in his excellent *Reflexions Philoſophiques* on the above work, is contented to obſerve, "Pour ce qui eſt des *combats* que l'auteur ſup-"poſe avoir été livrés entre *Jehovah* et *Satan*, il ne peut "les avoir trouvés que dans Milton." In what light Satan appears as the opponent of the Deity in the writings of Milton, we need not ſay; it muſt be well known, that in the two immortal Poems of that great writer,

writer, the whole object is to prove, that the "tranſ-"greſſor" could *not* "triumph," nor "the Almighty "fall." So that if the combat invented by the Poet, and engrafted on the plain and ſimple narrative of Moſes, may be held to inſtruct us in Scripture truths, we may expreſsly refer to it as an admirable reply to the impious ſuggeſtions of the author of the *Age of Reaſon*; while it being a fact, that no relation of any combat is to be found in the Scriptures between Jehovah and Satan, Diderot's compariſon falls at once to the ground.

It is not to be denied, however, that the doctrine of two principles, and the Moſaic relation of the fall of man, and introduction of evil into the world, have been often confounded, though nothing can in reality be more contrary; ſo much ſo indeed, that the learned author of the Divine Legation of Moſes would inſiſt upon it, that the hiſtory of Satan, in the book of Job, was expreſsly deſigned to guard the Jews againſt the error of two principles, which they had been in danger of imbibing, during their captivity in Babylon. [Book vi. §. 2.] Though the learned author might be miſtaken as to the true hiſtory of the book of Job, he had aſſuredly diſcernment enough to be entirely correct in his judgment of the character of Satan, and of his *ſubjection* to the Supreme Being, as they are repreſented in Scripture; nor can he be wrong in ſuppoſing, that the doctrine of two independent principles is directly oppoſed in the Scriptures, if not by the character of Satan in the book of Job, yet by the evident alluſion to the Magian ſuperſtition, and the vindication of God's ſupremacy, in the Prophecy of Iſaiah, xlv. 6, 7. "I form "the *light*, and create *darkneſs*; I make *peace*, and "create *evil*. There is no God beſides me;" which the learned author particularly refers to. "And yet," ſays he, "we have heads weighty enough to get to the "bottom of this matter;" that is, as he expreſſes himſelf, who, *contrary to the Scriptures*, would believe, that the Jews obtained their notion of Satan from the Chaldeans. Now this is a miſtake the world is ſtill in danger of being led into. In *Mr. Lindſey's Converſations on the Divine Government*, publiſhed ſo lately as 1802, the Jewiſh notions of an *evil* being are expreſsly ſuppoſed to have been derived from the Chaldeans; "who

"pro-

" probably might have pointed out to them," says he, " or they might themselves imagine, that the serpent, " who is represented as acting such a principal part in " their own sacred history, was the evil principle of the " Chaldeans." Mr. Lindsey's object is to prove, that there is *no* evil Being whatsoever, and that the Jews could derive no such idea from their own books. We may reasonably ask, why should they be more easily led to think the serpent might be the evil principle of the Chaldeans, than the *Satan* of Jews and Christians? " With whose history," says Warburton, " it is evident " they were acquainted in their captivity; and nothing " could better secure them *from* the dangerous error of " the *two principles*, which was part of the national re- " ligion of the country, into which they were led cap- " tive." So entirely do Bishop Warburton and Mr. Lindsey differ upon *this* subject. But in regard to the true character of the tempter and seducer of mankind, in the Mosaic history, I have endeavoured in the Discourse itself to state it as concisely as I could; and I am sure the account I have given is consonant to the words of Scripture; for there we undoubtedly read of " an " *opposing principle, but of no independent one.*"

This should never be lost sight of, because all our hopes must rest on the possibility of a redemption and deliverance from the evils of this world. Of the possibility of an *opposition* to the will of God we have daily experience, in the conduct of the hardened sinner; and therefore it is of the utmost importance to be able to look back to the first beginning of moral evil; that is, to the account given us in the Scripture of the *first* Being,

" Who durst defy th' Omnipotent."——

Paradise Lost, b. i. 49.

where, so far from finding any *independent principle*, any *triumphant transgressor*, the truth certainly is, as I have represented it, that, " as soon as we hear of him " in the Bible, we read of his dependence on the Su- " preme; as soon as we read of him as an enemy to " our nature, we have intimation of God's protection " against him." Gen. iii. 14, 15. Lord Bolingbroke pretends, indeed, that the supposition of an *inferior dependant Being, who is assumed to be the author of all evil*, is

is more abſurd than the doctrine of *two independent principles*. See him admirably anſwered by Leland, in his *View of Deiſtical Writers*, Letter xxx. note, p.149. vol. ii. 5th edit.

Page 111. *note* (3.)

For how could the relation of ſuch events be kept free from the marvellous?]

> " For man to tell how human life began
> " Is hard; for who himſelf beginning knew?
> *Paradiſe Loſt*, b. viii. 250.

" The account is what we ſhould call, in reference " to our experience, *miraculous*; but was it poſſible it " ſhould be otherwiſe? I believe the greateſt Infidel " will not deny, that it is at leaſt as plauſible an opi- " nion, that the world had a beginning, as that it had " not. If it had, can it be imagined by any man in his " ſenſes, that that particular quality ſhould be an ob- " jection to the narrative, which he knows it muſt " have? Muſt not the firſt production of things, the " original formation of animals and vegetables, require " exertions of power, which in preſervation and propa- " gation can never be exemplified?" *Campbell on Miracles*, Part II. §. 7. See alſo §. 6. p. 213.

That an extraordinary mode of production was indiſpenſably neceſſary, ſeems to be a fair concluſion, from the famous problem concerning the Hen and the Egg. *Macrobius*, lib. vii. The eternity of the world is contradicted by that very problem. See *Nichols's Conferences*, vol. i. p. 18. and conſult Macrobius for the arguments on the ſubject. It is not a little remarkable, that Moſes, in his Coſmogony, has expreſsly ſettled the queſtion, in the caſe of herbs and trees. Gen. i. 12.

Page 112. *note* (4).

It is well known in what terms a celebrated tranſlator has ſpoken of the author of the Pentateuch.] See Notes (6) and (12), Sermon II. At the end of Dr. Geddes's critical remarks on the Pentateuch, we have his creed as to the divine inſpiration of Moſes, in Latin verſes,

(*faulty*

(*faulty* ones, ſee *Brit. Crit.* vol. xix. p. 5.) thus engliſhed by himſelf.

" You aſk me ſerious, whether I believe
" That Moſes was inſpir'd? My friend, receive
" This ſerious anſwer: Yes, he was inſpir'd
" With that *ſame flame* which Numa's boſom fir'd.
" Numa, Lycurgus, every other ſage
" Who legiſlated for a barbarous age,
" All drank from wiſdom's fount, or wiſdom's rill;
" Large draughts they drew—but Moſes larger ſtill.
" Yet think not all the draughts that Moſes drew
" Were limpid draughts; ſometimes a ſlimy hue
" Beting'd the waters. Since the world began
" One man drew purely;—JESUS was that man!
" Jeſus alone, full of the godhead, brought
" A code of laws divine, that lacketh nought.
" Then dumb let other legiſlators be,
" And Jeſus only legiſlate for ME."

See *Good's Life of Dr. Geddes.*

Inſtead of other legiſlators being dumb, it is certainly remarkable, that Jeſus ſhould have ſaid of the Jewiſh legiſlator and his ſucceſſors, " If they hear not " Moſes and the Prophets, neither will they be per- " ſuaded though one roſe from the dead." Such was the opinion of our Lord himſelf, as to the authority of Moſes and the other ſacred writers of the Old Teſtament. But to anſwer Dr. Geddes in his own way; " If Moſes was a mere human legiſlator," ſays a very amiable modern writer, " how comes it that his inſti- " tutions are ſtill obeyed? He flouriſhed many ages " before *Lycurgus*, Solon, or *Numa*, who were eſteemed " the wiſeſt of mankind, in the ages in which they " reſpectively lived; and *they* travelled to remote re- " gions, to form a body of laws that ſhould combine " every poſſible advantage, which collective wiſdom " could beſtow. Theſe laws were ſolemnly impoſed, " and received with reverence; and the nations for " whom they were deſigned grew powerful and re- " nowned, under the influence of thoſe inſtitutions. " Yet, of theſe nations, hiſtory is now the only repoſi- " tory. No people, no body of men, not even a few " exiles are influenced by what a goddeſs whiſpered to " Numa, in 'the Egerian Grot,' or by what Lycurgus,

" from

" from his own perpetual exile, bound his countrymen " to obey: while the Jews have continued a diſtinct, " unmixed people, and, under every diſadvantage, pre- " ſerved their law and their cuſtoms." See *Mrs. Weſt's Letters to her Son.* How exactly Dr. Geddes agreed with Lord Bolingbroke in his opinion of the Bible, ſee *Earle's Remarks*, p. 66. For an anſwer to Lord Bolingbroke, ſee *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, Letters xxviii. xxix. xxx. vol. ii. 5th edit.

Page 112. *note* (5).

I allude to an extraordinary memorial preſented to a very conſpicuous member of the Chriſtian church in the kingdom of Pruſſia.] This memorial was addreſſed by certain Jews to M. Teller, *Conſeiller du Conſiſtoire ſupérieur, et Prévôt à Berlin*, about ſix or ſeven years ago. In it they expreſs a deſire to be admitted into ſociety, upon an equal footing with Chriſtians, on profeſſing their belief of five general propoſitions of moral theology, or *pure Deiſm*, which they ſubmit to his conſideration. They acknowledge themſelves to be quite prepared to renounce their faith in the divine origin of their Law, and expreſs a hope and expectation, that Chriſtians will be induced to accede to ſuch a common form of belief, to the excluſion of all particular doctrines. The Jews were admirably anſwered by M. de Luc; and a further correſpondence took place between him and M. Teller on the ſubject; in which the authenticity and literal ſenſe of the three firſt chapters of Geneſis are ably vindicated, and the indiſpenſable importance of the hiſtory they contain, evinced by many ſtrong arguments.

The Jews, in their memorial, having aſſigned, as a cauſe for their indifference in regard to the truth of the Moſaic records, the *recent advancement of human knowledge*, M. de Luc applies himſelf to examine into the real ſtate of knowledge, as it relates to the *hiſtory of man*; and with great judgment and force of reaſoning ſhews, that this is the very branch of ſcience leaſt capable of improvement, and in which, if Revelation is once abandoned, the leaſt certainty is to be expected. Having ſhewn that ſome ſciences admit of concluſive reaſoning, (ſuch as Geometry, Aſtronomy, &c.) while others

others do not, he thus proceeds to ſtate the need of Revelation, from the manifeſt uncertainty that muſt enſue from every man's having to form a religion for himſelf. " Il y a plus; on voit par l'expérience, que " moins l'entendement a de moyens ſûrs et précis pour " former quelque jugement ſur un objet, plus chaque " homme ſe croit en droit d'en décider: dans les ſci- " ences fondées ſur des lumières qui peuvent être ac- " quiſes avec certitude, on voit rarement ceux qui n'en " ont pas fait leur étude, ſe mêler d'en raiſonner. Mais " quant à la *Religion*, vers laquelle tend tout le ſujet " que je traite ici, en vue de votre mémoire; parce " qu'elle doit ſervir de baſe à la *morale*, et par celle-ci " à l'*ordre ſocial*; dès qu'on n'admettra pas une *révé-* " *lation* immédiate de l'Etre ſuprême, faite à certaines " époques pour tous les hommes; et qu'ainſi on ne " voudra de *Religion*, qu'autant que la *Raiſon* ſeule " pourra y conduire, chacun ſe fera une *Religion* pour " ſoi, s'il s'en fait une; car *la prétention à la Raiſon* eſt, " *et ne peut qu'être*, égale chez tous les hommes; et vu " la ſublimité de l'objet, vers lequel aucune connoiſ- " ſance humaine ne peut ſervir d'échelon, l'ignorant en " parlera même avec plus d'aſſurance que l'homme qui " s'en ſera occupé le plus profondement." He inſiſts upon it, that no abſtract propoſitions can be a ſufficient baſis of morality, and refers to the writings of M. Fichte, Profeſſor of Philoſophy at Jéna, to ſhew how little agreement is even now to be expected in regard to the deciſions of pure Reaſon. M. Fichte, he obſerves, had by anticipation, as it were, expreſsly contradicted the very firſt of their five propoſitions. " Il " y a un *Dieu*—être *incréé*—*unique*—*infini*—le *Créateur* " —*Conſervateur* et *Juge* de l'univers." But according to M. Fichte, the idea of a creation diſtinct from the Creator is an abſurdity. " Je voudrois, qu'il eût plu à " mes adverſaires de me donner ſur ce ſujet, pour la " premiere fois, un mot intelligible, qui me fît entendre " ce qu'ils veulent exprimer en diſant, *Dieu a créé le* " *monde*, et comment on peut ſe *faire une idée* d'une " telle *création*. Tant qu'ils n'auront pas donné ce " mot, j'aurai droit de penſer qu'il faut *avoir perdu l'eſ-* " *prit* pour croire à un Dieu *comme ils y croient*, et que " mon *Athéiſme* ne conſiſte qu'en ce que je voudrois " garder

"garder mon eſprit." I have ventured to tranſcribe this paſſage from M. Fichte's Appeal to the public, as I find it in M. de Luc's *Lettre aux Juifs*, becauſe it certainly ſerves to prove M. de Luc's point, viz. that no advances, that have been recently made in human knowledge, may encourage us to expect any greater agreement among men, in regard to any abſtract propoſitions; and that nothing leſs than a divine revelation can ever be expected to produce a general acknowledgment of the very firſt principle of Religion, namely, that there exiſts a Creator of the univerſe, a Creator who is diſtinct from the viſible creation. "J'ai "dit," ſays M. Fichte, as I find him cited in another place, "que l'idée de Dieu, comme ſubſtance à part, "étoit une idée impoſſible et contradictoire." According then to M. Fichte, both Jews and Chriſtians have loſt their wits, who pretend to believe the creation of the univerſe, as generally received. And we have poſitive proof, to uſe M. de Luc's own words, "que les "idées d'un *Créateur* et d'un *monde créé* peuvent être "rejetées par les hommes, quand elles ne leur ſont "préſentées que comme des *idées de la Raiſon*."

But M. de Luc proves further, that every one of the Jews' five propoſitions is contradicted by the ſyſtem of M. Fichte. "Jugez par là, Meſſieurs," M. de Luc concludes, "quels peuvent être les écarts de l'eſprit hu-"main, quant aux *dogmes*; tandis que vous conſidé-"riez ceux que vous propoſez dans votre mémoire, "comme étant appuiés ſur le *commun conſentement de* "*tous les hommes*, d'après les lumières naturelles!" I ſhall have occaſion to notice M. de Luc's correſpondence with M. Teller hereafter.

Page 113. *note* (6.)

The ſtrict connection between the Old and the New Teſtaments—our Lord himſelf has taught us to acknowledge and maintain.] Tertullian, in his book *adverſus Judæos*, has ably pointed out the connection between the two Teſtaments. See *Houtteville's Critical and Hiſtorical Diſcourſe*. See alſo *Lactantius*, lib. iv. St. Cyril of Jeruſalem gives this definition of Chriſtian faith: "Ἡ πίστις —πᾶσαν τὴν ἐν τῇ παλαιᾷ καὶ καινῇ [διαθήκῃ ſubintell.] τῆς εὐσεβείας γνῶσιν ἐγκεκολπίσαι. *Catechef.* V. And in his

VIIth

VIIth Lecture he deprecates every ſeparation of the two Teſtaments: Οὐ γὰρ ἀνεξόμεθα τῶν αἱρετικῶν τῶν τὴν παλαιὰν τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης ἀποχίζοντων· ἀλλὰ τῷ Χριστῷ πεισθησόμεθα, τῷ λέγοντι περὶ τοῦ Ἱεροῦ, (the temple of the Jews,) ἐκ ἤδειτε ὅτι ἐν τοῖς τοῦ Πατρός μου δεῖ με εἶναι; acknowledging, as Cyril remarks, that the temple of Jeruſalem was his Father's houſe. The ſame Father, in his *Xth Lecture*, ſpeaks of John the Baptiſt, as, τρόπον τινὰ συνάπτων ἀμφοτέρας ἐν αὐτῷ τὰς διαθήκας, παλαίαν καὶ καίνην. "Quodammodo *conglutinans in ſeipſo* ambo Teſ-"tamenta," as Grodecius renders it. See alſo *Diſc.* xvi.

What was heretical in the days of Cyril is ſo now. The Old and New Teſtaments are *inſeparable*; and no true Chriſtian can think himſelf authorized to "put "aſunder" what God has by ſo many notices "joined" and connected. "Ἀληθῶς μὲν γὰρ," as Origen ſays, (*contr. Celſ.* lib. ii.) Χριστιανοῖς ἡ εἰσαγωγὴ ἐστιν ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν Μωϋσέως, καὶ τῶν προφητικῶν γραμμάτων." The ſeparation indeed is never propoſed, but with ſome deſign of getting rid of the peculiar doctrines of our moſt holy religion. The Deiſt is for the ſeparation, becauſe, connected, the evidence of a divine interpoſition is too ſtrong to be reſiſted: the great chain of prophecies and events muſt be broken, or *his* cauſe is loſt: the hand of God muſt be acknowledged. The Socinian is for the ſeparation, becauſe atonement and redemption by *blood* are too prominently ſhadowed forth, in the typical ſacrifices of the Jewiſh law, to be diſputed or reſiſted. For, as an elegant writer has lately obſerved of the Old Teſtament, "If this remains as a type, then "the Chriſtian doctrine of atonement muſt be received "as the fulfilment; and therefore," ſays ſhe, "the "Socinians impugn its authority." See *Weſt's Letters to her Son.*

But beſides the Jewiſh ſacrifices, the fall of man ſo evidently implies the need of redemption, that the Socinian is equally intereſted in getting rid of this; which Dr. Prieſtley plainly diſcovers, in his *Letter to a Philoſophical Unbeliever*, Part II. Pref. p. xiii. where, without any attempt to argue the point, he gives us merely his own opinion of the ſubject. "*I believe* the "ſacred writers," ſays he, "to be men of probity; "but nevertheleſs men, and conſequently *fallible*, and

" liable to *miſtake* with reſpect to things, to which " they had not given much attention, or concerning " which they had not the means of exact information; " which *I take to be the caſe*, with reſpect to the ac- " count which Moſes has given of the *creation* and *fall* " *of man*." The Jews are guilty of a prejudiced ſeparation of the two Covenants, when they unreaſonably deny that their Law is typical. See *Leſlie's Method with the Jews*, p. 78. fol. edit.

There is alſo a ſet of *Geological* Deiſts, who openly aſſert the independence of the two Covenants; having, *as they think*, good ground to diſpute the Moſaic account of the creation, of the deluge, &c. In order to render their opinions *palatable*, they aſſure the world, that Chriſtianity has nothing to do with thoſe chapters of the book of Geneſis, in which theſe facts are recorded. See Diſcourſes V. and VI.

While ſuch motives exiſt then for inducing men to conſider the two Teſtaments as ſeparable, it may be well to repeat the admirable caution of Biſhop Warburton. " I reply then," ſays he, " that it will admit of " no diſpute, but that if they may have liberty of in- " venting two *chimeras*, and of calling one *Judaiſm*, and " the other *Chriſtianity*, they will have a very eaſy vic- " tory over both." This is an old trick, and has often been tried with ſucceſs: but ſure the Deiſt is not to obtrude his own *inventions* for thoſe religions he endeavours to overthrow. Much leſs is he to *beg the queſtion* of their falſity; as the laying it down that the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* are two independent religions certainly is; becauſe *Chriſtianity* claims its titles of divinity from and under *Judaiſm*. If therefore *Deiſts will not*, yet *Chriſtians muſt* of neceſſity take their religion as they find it: and if they will remove infidel objections to either religion, they muſt reaſon on the principle of *dependency*; and while they do ſo, their reaſonings will not only be juſt and logical, but every ſolution, on ſuch a principle, will, beſides its determination on the particular point in queſtion, be a new proof of the divinity of both in general; becauſe ſuch a relation, connection, and dependency between two religions of ſo diſtant periods, could not poſſibly come about but by Divine proviſion. For a Deiſt therefore to bid us remove his

" ob-

" objections on the principle of independency, is to bid " us prove our religion *true* on a principle, that implies " its *falsehood*: the *New* Teſtament giving us no other " idea of *Chriſtianity* than as of a religion dependent on, " connected with, and the completion of *Judaiſm*." *Divine Legation of Moſes*, book v. §. 5.

Page 119. *note* (7).

Nor yet can it ever point out to him what will be efficacious to redeem him from ſin and death.] Porphyry, that great enemy to Chriſtianity, confeſſed that no ſyſtem of philoſophy had ſupplied him with *a method of delivering men's ſouls*. *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, lib. x. c. 32. In this then moſt eſpecially the utility of Revelation conſiſts, and upon this ground we may reaſonably prove the truth and divinity of the holy Scriptures by Origen's teſt: τὸ γὰρ ἓν τῶν δύο δεῖ σε παραδέξασθαι ἐπὶ τούτων τῶν γραφῶν· ἢ ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶ θεόπνευστοι, ἐπεὶ οὐκ εἰσὶ ὠφέλιμοι, ὡς ὑπολαμβάνει ὁ ἄπιστος, ἢ ὡς πιστὸς παραδέξασθαι, ὅτι ἐπεὶ εἰσιν ὠφέλιμοι θεόπνευστοί εἰσιν. *Philocalia*, c. xii. Thoſe who will not acknowledge redemption to be neceſſary, are not qualified to judge of the *utility* of Chriſtianity.

Page 120. *note* (8).

But to aſſert, that in the mere morality of the Goſpel conſiſts the whole of Chriſtianity, muſt be either a groſs miſconception, or a moſt perverſe miſrepreſentation of matters.] All, ſays Rouſſeau, (*Letters from the Mountains*, Letter III.) that we ought to believe inſpired, is what relates to our duty; for to *what purpoſe* ſhould God give the reſt by inſpiration? I anſwer; our duty is founded, in the Goſpel of Chriſt, on our *hopes*. God has been pleaſed to make *his ſervice perfect freedom*. We are no longer *ſervants* under the Goſpel, we are *heirs of the promiſes*; joint-heirs with Chriſt in the kingdom of heaven. To know our duty from inſpiration is a great ſecurity; but to know our proſpects of forgiveneſs, and the promiſes of pardon through Chriſt, from inſpiration, is a foundation for the moſt glorious hopes and moſt comfortable encouragements. God might have given us no more than rules of practice; but the *doctrinal words of comfort* are of the moſt intrinſic value. Thoſe who are diſpoſed to

regard *duty* before *doctrine*, would do well to consult an admirable note to Bishop Burgess's Sermon on the Divinity of Christ; where he shews, that "to object that "practical duties are *more* important than religious "opinions, is foreign to the subject, and implies the "denial of what is not denied. It is fruitless to en- "quire which of two duties be the more acceptable, "where both are indispensable; and dangerous to form "comparisons of two indispensable duties, where the "preference of one tends to the depreciation of the "other."

Page 121. *note* (9).

If we will not be informed of these matters historically—we must be contented to be ignorant.] The learned Archbishop King says indeed, that, though there had been no history of the fall of man, we should have had a proper answer to make to the infidel; since though the misery and corruption of mankind is really lamentable, yet it is not so great, but that it may be reconciled with the good Providence of God. This may be so; but it is much better not to have to rely on human Reason to determine such a point for the world in general, for Reason will always find something to oppose to Reason: and however clear the answer might appear to the Archbishop, he must have known, from the disposition of Bayle, whom he was answering, that nothing short of an historical account of matters could satisfy the scruples of a Manichean.

Page 123. *note* (10).

What intimation he gave him of his condition and future destiny; or whether any such intimation was ever given?] This last is in fact the great enquiry. Mr. Hume's arguments to prove that we cannot presume ever to reason or even to enquire concerning what has been, or may be; that is, (to use his own words) "in regard to "the origin of worlds, and the situation of nature, "*from* and *to eternity*;" do not at all preclude us from the enquiry, whether a Revelation has been made. A Revelation accompanied with such circumstances as contribute to clear up the moral doubts that must otherwise necessarily perplex us in our passage through life,

life, and ſupported and confirmed by proofs affecting the ſenſes, or capable of being judged of and appreciated by Reaſon, muſt needs become one of thoſe events, not only ſubject to, but imperiouſly demanding our notice and examination. Mr. H. would certainly not preclude enquiry and examination in the caſe of the Pagan mythologies; the mere attempt to impoſe them on the world, renders them fit ſubjects of enquiry. The queſtion is not, as Mr. Hume would inſinuate, how does God act, or will God act, ſeparate from the viſible works of his hands; but whether God has, or has not, operated in an extraordinary manner to enlighten and inſtruct the world. We ſtill appeal to *facts*, not to *metaphyſics*.

Page 124. *note* (11).

If not as an inſtrument of happineſs univerſally, yet as the indiſpenſable diſtinction of the high rank we hold in the ſcale of being.] Though the ſcale of being may be liable to objections, when conſidered as the cauſe and occaſion of the preſent exiſtence of evil; (ſee Note 1.) yet that a ſcale of being prevails we cannot queſtion. Bayle, who contends that the doctrine of free-will is derogatory to the honour of God, ventures to affirm, "that "Adam and Eve would have looked upon God's re- "ſtraint to keep them from falling, as a new favour, as "great as the precedent one of free-will." Note M. art. *Pauliciens*. How differently does Rouſſeau judge of the gift of free-will! "Murmurer de ce que Dieu ne l'em- "pêche pas de faire le mal, c'eſt murmurer de ce qu'il la fit "d'une nature excellente, de ce qu'il mit à ſes actions la "moralité qui les ennoblit, de ce qu'il lui donna droit à la "vertu." *Emile* tom. iii. 51. And in another place he expreſſes himſelf much more ſtrongly, where he obſerves, that, without the chance of moral evil, man would be *no better* than the angels; "et ſans doute," he adds, "l'homme vertueux ſera plus qu'eux." Liv. iv. And certainly he is right as far as regards the *evil* angels. See 1 Cor. vi. 3. The *good* angels Mr. Bayle ſuppoſes not to be free, by way of perplexing thoſe who aſſert free-will to be by its abuſe the cauſe of evil; but this is to ſuppoſe free-will *muſt* be abuſed: which is far from being the caſe. See note 90. p. 241. *King's Ori-*

gin of Evil, 4to edit. and note 93. p. 247. Indeed the true object of man's free-will seems to be, that he should be capable of *praise*, *reward*, and *approbation* in the presence of God; and which the Protoplasts might have merited by *preserving their innocence*; for they would have resembled Milton's "inviolable saints," *Par. Lost*, b. vi. whose

> " Cubic phalanx firm, advanc'd entire,
> " Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd;
> " Such high advantages their *innocence*
> " Gave them above their foes, *not to have sinn'd*,
> " *Not to have disobey'd*."

And it is certainly reasonable what Justin Martyr says of the *possibility* of moral evil; ὃ γὰρ ἂν ἦν ἐπαινετὸν ἐδὲν εἰ ἐκ ἦν ἐπ' ἀμφότερα (κακίαν καὶ ἀρετὴν) τρέπεσθαι, καὶ δύναμιν εἶχε. *Pro Christianis Apol.* 1. See also his 2*d Apol.* p. 63. edit. Sylburg.

The atheistical Author of the *Système de la Nature* says, the system of the free-will of man seems only invented to put it in man's power to offend God, and to vindicate the latter from all blame on account of the evil committed by man, through the abuse of the fatal gift (*la liberté funeste*) he had bestowed on him. But the circumstance of the Tree of Life in the Mosaic account plainly proves, that man's offence, and the evil consequences thereof, were not more in the contemplation of the supreme Legislator, when he gave the law, than his *strict obedience* and the *blessings* flowing therefrom, and which *might* have been as well the *fruits* of his *liberty*. M. Holland's excellent remark upon this objection of the *Système de la Nature* is as follows; " Un bien " dont on peut abuser, mais dont *le bon usage* mene in- " failliblement au bonheur, n'est point un présent *funeste*, " et ne le devient que par notre propre faute. P. 65. P. II. See also *Clarke on the Attributes*, p. 123; where he maintains, that, if liberty is not a perfection in man, though liable to abuse, it would follow, that a stone must needs be more perfect than a man, insomuch as it wants liberty, reason, and knowledge, through which alone a man does certainly become capable of misery.

But it is never sufficiently considered by those who object to the abuse of free-will, as being a sufficient solution of the origin of evil, that, according to the Scriptures,

tures, it was not abuſed, but *in expreſs contradiction to God's command*; and certainly St. Thomas argues reaſonably, "Si miniſter faciat aliquid *contrà mandatum* "*domini*, hoc non reducitur in dominum ſicut in cau- "ſam. Et ſimiliter peccatum, quod liberum arbitrium "committit contra præceptum Dei, non reducitur in "Deum ſicut in cauſam." *Summâ*, Part. II. Quæſt. lxxix. Art. 1. Juſtin Martyr ſays that Plato borrowed of Moſes the following remark, in regard to the origin of moral evil; that man's own choice renders *him* the cauſe of evil, but God is faultleſs; Αἰτία Ἑλομένῳ, Θεὸς δ' ἀναίτιος. *Apol. ad Ant. P.* p. 63. and the paſſage of Moſes referred to certainly bears him out; Ἰδὲ πρὸ προσώπῳ σε τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ κακόν· ἐκλέξαι τὸ ἀγαθόν. What Juſtin Martyr further ſays in the ſame place on the ſubject of free-will is alſo much to the purpoſe. See beſides the anſwer to the VIIIth Queſtion *ad Orthodoxos*, attributed to Juſtin Martyr; a ſpurious work probably, but very ingenious. Conſult alſo *Biſhop Stillingfleet's Origines Sacr.* B. iii. chap. 3. §. vi.

"The permiſſion of evil," ſays Dr. Price, in his admirable remarks on Dr. Prieſtley's ſtrange ſcheme of Fataliſm and Materialiſm, "is to be accounted for "chiefly, by the impoſſibility of producing the greateſt "good, without giving *active powers*, and allowing "ſcope for exerciſing them." Add, that without the freedom of the human will, God could have been no moral governor, or have diſplayed any of the perfections of juſtice, mercy, and the like: ſee *Clarke's Sermons*, vol. v. p. 91.

Page 128. *note* (12).

Not derived from ſuch deities as Jupiter and Apollo.] Τί ἂν πρὸς ταῦτα ἀποκρίναιτο ὁ Ζευς, ἢ ὁ Απόλλων, ἢ τις ἄλλος μαντικὸς Θεός; ſays Maximus Tyrius in regard to the very queſtion of the origin of evil. Ἀκέσωμεν, he goes on, τῶν προφήτε λέγοντος; (it is Jupiter that addreſſes the Gods;)

Ὦ πόποι, οἷον δή νυ θεὸς βροτοὶ αἰτιόωνται·
Ἐξ ἡμέων γάρ φασι κάκ' ἔμμεναι· οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ
Σφῇσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὑπὲρ μόρον ἄλγε' ἔχουσι.

Hom. Od. ά. 33.

Max. Tyr. Diſſertat. xxv.

Page 128. *note* (13.)

Without ſuch an explanation of matters, this world is a myſtery &c.] "The world, inſtead of being, as the "vanity of ſome men has taught them to aſſert, a la-"byrinth of which they hold the clue, is in reality full "of enigmas, which no penetration of man has hitherto "been able to ſolve." *Godwin.* We grant this to Mr. Godwin. It is *God* holds the clue, and man can know no more, in regard to many moſt important points, than what God is pleaſed to reveal to him. It would be well if *Deiſts* and *Free-thinkers* would attend to this.

SERMON IV.

ECCLESIASTICUS XV. 12.

Say not thou, God hath cauſed me to err; for he hath no need of the ſinful man.

IN my laſt Diſcourſe I endeavoured to ſhew, that however highly we may be diſpoſed to eſtimate the faculty of human Reaſon, and whatever advantages may have accrued of late, from the progreſs and advancement of human knowledge, towards the due exerciſe and application of its powers; and laſtly, whatever importance we may be inclined to allow to metaphyſical enquiries, where the ſubject is ſuitable, and certainly attainable; there are ſome queſtions connected with theology, and particularly thoſe that relate to the moral government of the world, which are wholly incapable of being ſolved by ſpeculative reaſoning. Such are indiſputably thoſe that regard the origin of *man*, and the origin

gin of *evil.* And therefore, that if the Scripture account of theſe two moſt important and intereſting events is fabulous, ſo far from our deriving any ſatisfaction from the detection of ſuch an impoſture, the world could only become, from ſuch a circumſtance, a greater myſtery to us than ever.

The particulars of the account may to ſuperficial enquirers appear allegorical (r), becauſe the preſent appearances of things might be deſcribed under ſuch figures. But we ought to remember, that, in looking for the origin of evil in the Bible, as a revelation from God, of the firſt beginning of things, it is not a *deſcription* of preſent appearances, but an *explanation,* we are in ſearch of. We do not want to know, in the way of *deſcription,* that man is liable to temptations; but, in the way of *explanation,* why there was a tempter;—that the laws of God have been univerſally infringed; but what law was firſt broken, and how man became capable of tranſgreſſing any law of God?—that death is an event common to all; but how it became ſo? Theſe are facts and events, certainly not capable of being *explained* by allegory; and a figurative repreſentation

preſentation of ſuch matters is altogether uſeleſs.

Yet they muſt appear, when duly conſidered, to be of ſuch awful importance to us, that if man could be ſuppoſed to have ever had any claim upon his Maker, he might, I think, moſt reaſonably have expected to have been either hiſtorically or ſupernaturally informed of the firſt beginning of things; that is, by ſome mode of communication, more certain and intelligible than through the medium of the viſible works of nature. Theſe may ſerve to diſcloſe to us the power, and the wiſdom, and the majeſty of God; but they cannot inform us of his *will* and *deſign* in the *creation* of *man*. It is written, ſays the great Lord Bacon, "Cœli "enarrant *gloriam* Dei," "The Heavens de- "clare the *glory* of God;" but it is not written, "Cœli enarrant *voluntatem* Dei." His will and pleaſure with regard to man muſt be ſought for elſewhere; de illis pronuntiatur, "*ad legem et teſtimonia*[a]."

And yet, when Reaſon ſhall have ſeduced us to diſcard Revelation, ſhe has no appeal to

[a] *De Aug. Scient.* lib. ix.

make,

make, but to the *volume* of *nature*. This, we are ſtill told, with the utmoſt confidence, is fully ſufficient for our inſtruction, not only in all virtue and godlineſs of living, but in the only true religion, and the worſhip due to the Creator. And we are told beſides, with a manifeſt inſinuation that Chriſtianity is defective in this reſpect, that the volume of nature is *univerſally legible*. It may be well therefore to record, as an event peculiarly connected with this age of Reaſon, and the more inſtructive on this account, that a view of nature, in the very ſame period of time, in the ſame country, amidſt the ſame advantages and diſadvantages of cultivated ſociety, has but lately made a profeſſed Theiſt of one of the moſt popular writers of the Continent, and an Atheiſt of a ſecond. Chriſtians may differ as to the interpretation of the language of Scripture; but none deny the finger of God in it: whereas in this caſe it appears that a cloſe ſtudy of the volume of nature, a philoſophical conſideration of the whole ſyſtem, metaphyſical, phyſical, and moral, terminated in *atheiſm* (2). The caſe is undeniable. Even an Atheiſt muſt here be believed on his word.

Had

Had not the author of *The Syſtem of Nature*[b], to which I allude, been a confirmed Atheiſt, it is impoſſible he could have written, much more have publiſhed, ſuch a work: indeed he claims to be believed upon this very ground[c].

This ſurely will not be received as an unimportant digreſſion, when it ſerves ſo ſtrongly to ſhew the fallibility of human Reaſon, upon ſuch ſubjects; and when we know beſides, which is true, that the work above mentioned, which is argumentative from beginning to end, appeared at the very time when, of thoſe confederate with the author in the overthrow of all revealed Religion, one very eminent writer[d] was inſiſting upon the full ſufficiency of natural Religion, as well for inſtruction in the worſhip due to God, as in the conduct and regulation of our own lives; while another[e] was aſſerting of the book of

[b] Publiſhed under the name of *Mirabaud*. The real author is generally ſuppoſed to have been Diderot.

[c] "Si ce Dieu tout-puiſſant eſt jaloux de ſes prérogatives— "comment permet-il qu'un mortel comme moi oſe attaquer ſes "droits, ſes titres, ſon exiſtence même?" Ch. iii. part. ii.

[d] Voltaire.

[e] Rouſſeau, *Emile*, tom. iii.

Nature,

Nature, that "none were excuſable for neg-"lecting to ſtudy it, becauſe it ſpeaks to all "conditions of men, a language intelligible "to every mind:" and that "*whoever could* "*ſay, there is no God,* muſt be a falſifier, "or inſane:" and while here at home, the author of the *Age of Reaſon* was confidently aſſuring us, that "the viſible creation "is the *only word of God,* which every man "*can* read, and which reveals all that is ne-"ceſſary for man to know of God[f]."

But this is mere ſophiſtry: there is nothing more eſſential to our forming correct notions of the Deity, than that we ſhould be properly inſtructed reſpecting the *origin of evil;* and that we are not to expect to derive ſuch inſtruction from a mere view of the viſible creation, beſides the inſtances adduced above, is evident from the great diverſity of opinions that have prevailed upon this ſubject; many of which, ſo far from ſerving to elevate our thoughts to an independent Being, or to a ſupreme moral Governor of the world, have a manifeſt tendency to rob the Deity of both theſe attributes. For as it would ſeem im-

[f] *Age of Reaſon,* pp. 26, 27.

poſſible

poſſible to reconcile the falſe ſyſtems of antiquity with the *independence* of the Supreme Being; ſo I think it would be equally impoſſible to bring the modern ſyſtems to accord with his *moral government* of the world.

The Socinians, and modern Unitarians, as they ſtyle themſelves (3), deny, as is well known, the exiſtence of an evil Being; and will not receive the common interpretation of the Scriptures, in regard to the temptation and fall of man. The tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents, according to the latter eſpecially, as ſet forth in a very recent publication[g], proceeded, not from the violation of one plain, eaſy, and intelligible reſtriction, the compliance with which might as fully have eſtabliſhed their freedom of will, and conſtituted them moral beings, as their diſobedience and tranſgreſſion; a reſtriction ſo communicated as to be their inſtruction and ſecurity, rather than a ſnare to them: but, as the publication alluded to ſets forth, from "the *ſelfiſh, jealous, malig-*

[g] *Lindſey on the Divine Government*, 1802. See p. 215.

"*nant*,

" *nant, cruel, impure, envious, fraudulent,* " *ambitious* deſires" *implanted* in them. This is the preſent Socinian opinion of the origin of moral evil! Every corrupt deſire and baſe principle that can be thought of, *implanted* in our firſt progenitors by God himſelf! Can ſuch a repreſentation of matters be thought conſiſtent with God's attributes of mercy and goodneſs? Is not this to ſay, in the very worſt ſenſe of the expreſſion, that " God " hath cauſed us to err[h]?"

And what other interpretation can we put on the reaſonings of thoſe modern reformers, who ſtill contend ſo earneſtly for the doctrine of *neceſſity?* Never was this doctrine carried to ſo great an extent as it has been of late: we are confidently told, that there is no operation of the mind or body, that can be free. We are not free to act, nor free to chooſe, nor free to deliberate about our choice, nor free to will whether we ſhall deliberate or not (4). Our judgments, and our feelings, and our moſt hid-

[h] Compare Mr. Hume's notions, as admirably ſet forth in *Bp. Horne's Letters on Infidelity,* Letter V.

den

den ſentiments are all alike ſubject to the law of neceſſity[i]; and to pretend to be free, we are told, is to pretend to act without motives[k]. According to the moſt modern ſyſtems, we are ſuch mere machines, that one writer has even ventured to aſſure us[l], that, in the caſe of murder, "the aſſaſſin can "no more help the murder he commits, "than the dagger can, which he em-"ploys." (5) That is, for it is ſo explained, that the cauſes and motives, that determine the one, are as neceſſary and irreſiſtible as thoſe that determine the other.

It is in vain to plead any diſtinction between rational and mechanical motives (6); in the modern ſyſtems all motives are alike mechanical in their operations, and *mind* is univerſally as paſſive as the dulleſt matter[m]: indeed the ſoul itſelf is conſidered, by one

[i] See *Prieſtley's Illuſtrations*, pp. 287, 288. *Syſtême de la Nature*, &c.

[k] *Pol. Juſtice*, b. iv. c. 7. and *Prieſtley's Free Diſcuſſion of the Doctrines of Materialiſm.* Dr. Price's anſwer was, that he could conceive no aſſertion more groundleſs.

[l] *Godwin, Pol. Juſt.* p. 689. Compare *Letters on Infidelity*, before cited. Lett. V.

[m] "Mind is an agent in no other ſenſe than matter is an "agent." *Godwin, Pol. Juſt.* vol. ii. 317.

popular writer, as altogether material [n]. We are not ſuffered to appeal to Scripture to decide for us, nor to common ſenſe, or common feeling: for the Chriſtian Revelation *would*, we are told, *have* been openly adapted to the doctrine of neceſſity, had the bulk of mankind been *philoſophers* [o]! And when it is admitted and granted to us, that all men have a conſciouſneſs of a power to do what they will, we are taught to look upon this only as a deception (7); a deception ſo ill managed indeed, that while nature is ſaid to have deſigned to impoſe upon men in general, ſhe has inadvertently given to ſome ſagacity enough to ſee through the impoſture [p].

No circumſtances of character or diſpoſition (8), no cultivation of good habits, or encouragement of evil ones, can be ſuffered to make any difference between the virtuous and the wicked, as *neceſſary* beings; they are equally propelled by motives, over which they have no power, and governed by cauſes the moſt certain and irreſiſtible. Inſtead of

[n] Prieſtley. [o] See *Prieſtley's Free Diſcuſſion*, &c.
[p] See *Beattie on Truth*, p. 313.

being

being in any inſtance the authors or beginners of any events whatſoever, to uſe their own expreſſions, men are only "the vehi-"cles through which certain cauſes ope-"rate[q]." The very firſt principles of Religion are turned againſt us; laws founded on rewards and puniſhments, we are told, *muſt* infer, that ſuch motives have a regular and uniform influence on the mind, and therefore eſtabliſh the doctrine of neceſſity[r]. But ſurely, if this reaſoning is right, the common courſe of events muſt appear to be in open contradiction to it; for how could puniſhment itſelf ever become neceſſary, if the mere dread of it was ſufficient, as a reſtraining motive, to prevent tranſgreſſion? How could ſome incur puniſhment, and others not, if the motives had an uniform influence? And how, after all, could any expect to be puniſhed by a moral Being, for actions altogether neceſſary and unavoidable?

But the numberleſs inconſiſtencies to be met with in the works I have in view, would

[q] *Polit. Juſt.* b. iv. c. 8. or as Diderot expreſſes it, "Inſtru-"mens paſſifs entre les mains de la néceſſité." *Syſtême de la Nature*, ch. vi.

[r] *Hume's Eſſays.*

amply ſerve to ſhew, how difficult it is by any arguments to ſupport a ſyſtem ſo entirely in oppoſition to our common ſentiments and common feelings. Such inconſiſtencies it would be eaſy to point out, and they might be inſiſted upon with conſiderable effect, if the caſe required it: but there is one inconſiſtency, into which all theſe writers have fallen, which I think may well ſerve us as a ſecurity againſt the bad effects to which the doctrine naturally leads. For, excluſive of the falſe notions it muſt tend to give us of the Deity, as moral governor of the world, I know no danger ſo great to be apprehended from this ſyſtem, as that very obvious one, of ſetting men entirely free from every ſenſe of reſponſibility. To expect to be puniſhed by a good God, for actions which he himſelf is ſuppoſed to have rendered as neceſſary and determinate as the revolutions of the ſtars, or the falling of heavy bodies, if not contrary to the ſyſtems of modern philoſophy, muſt aſſuredly be allowed to be entirely contrary to the plaineſt dictates of common ſenſe and common reaſon.

It may be well therefore to notice, that

none

none of the modern advocates of this doctrine allow us to draw ſuch a concluſion (9); they even go ſo far as to aſſert, that their ſyſtem is not only friendly to religion and morality, but indiſpenſably neceſſary to both: that, ſo far from rendering us incapable of offence, or not amenable to juſtice, it is the only ſyſtem under which we can become either amenable to juſtice, or capable of offence.

This may ſeem very extraordinary, and I am far from thinking it capable of being rendered in any manner intelligible: but it is of *this* importance to us certainly, that it reduces the queſtion to a mere *nullity*. If we can by any arguments be ſhewn to be capable of morality, and amenable to the juſtice of God or man, under a ſyſtem of ſtrict neceſſity, we are only brought to the ſame ſtate, in which both common ſenſe and religion would place us. And while there is certainly no advantage to be gained by the exchange of one ſyſtem for the other, we ſhall do well to reflect, that, before we can adopt the ſyſtem of fataliſm, we muſt conſent to abandon every diſtinction which now ſeems to raiſe us above brute matter,

and to elevate us to a reſemblance of the Deity! a reſemblance, it is true, of finite to infinite; but which may with reverence be ſpoken of, and which enters into the deſcription of the Moſaic coſmogony. Inſtead of the plain and ſimple account of things, which the Scripture gives us, that God was pleaſed, from the firſt moment of man's creation, to ſet before him, for his free choice, "good and evil, life or death[s]," we muſt bring ourſelves to think ſo unworthily of our Maker, as that HE hath neceſſarily "cauſed us to err," as my text expreſſes it; and that a Being of infinite perfections, of power infinite, of wiſdom infinite, of *goodneſs* infinite, "had need of the ſinful man!"

Inſtead of believing, as the Scriptures teach us, that moral evil among men had its origin in the wilful infringement of one trifling reſtriction amidſt the moſt magnificent profuſion of favours, we muſt believe, at the hazard of all the conſequences that common ſenſe would naturally deduce from ſuch a ſyſtem, that moral evil proceeds from the original conſtitution of our nature, and is,

[s] Deut. xxx. 15.

and

and ever has been, altogether inevitable. We muſt be contented to believe, that we have no certain and authentic account of the firſt beginning of things, though ſuch a concluſion muſt compel us to acknowledge, that we have no account *more* authentic of the conſummation and end. If moral evil was not introduced into the world, as the Scriptures repreſent, we have no right, nor any reaſon to perſuade ourſelves, that it will be aboliſhed, as they propoſe. For it is only thoſe who are prepared to believe, that "in "Adam all died," who may be allowed to hope, that "in Chriſt all ſhall be made "alive[t]."

But to advert once more to the doctrine of neceſſity. Having ventured to pronounce it to be an inconſiſtency to conceive *penal* laws to be reconcileable to a ſyſtem of fataliſm, I ſhall, for my own vindication, offer one example, ſuch as the time will allow me, of the method in which one of the greateſt opponents of free-will and free agency[u] would attempt to reconcile them. He is ſpeaking, it is true, only of the laws

[t] 1 Cor. xv. 22. [u] Diderot.

of man; but if man can have a right to puniſh a neceſſary being, knowing him to be ſuch, we can ſcarce deny the ſame power to God. "If," ſays he, "there ſhall be "found any perſons ſo conſtituted as to *re-* "*ſiſt*, or be *inſenſible* to, the *motives*, which "actuate the reſt of mankind, they are not "fit to live among them; and their *rebel-* "*lious* and *unſociable wills* not admitting of "being *modified* ſo as to become conforma- "ble to the general intereſt, the ſociety will "naturally oppoſe them, and inflict *pains* "and *penalties* on theſe beings, upon whom "the *motives* preſented to them have not "had the *effects* that were to be expect- "ed." (tc)

This is the way in which we are taught to acknowledge the juſtice and propriety of penal laws, under a ſyſtem of neceſſity. I am much miſtaken, if any expreſſions could have been ſelected more thoroughly in contradiction to the very ſyſtem itſelf. It is a point however, which we muſt leave to Fataliſts themſelves to ſettle; it has only been my object to ſhew, that in not ſetting us free from the operation of penal laws, and moral reſponſibility, it is a ſyſtem from which we can

reap

reap no poſſible advantage; and as we may never expect to be able by any arguments to render it more reconcileable to our common feelings than to the word of Scripture, even as a philoſophical ſpeculation, it may be conſidered as uſeleſs and unſatisfactory.

The ſame may, I think, be ſaid of the doctrine concerning the *materiality* of the human ſoul; which, if granted, is *now* held not to ſtand in the way of our belief of its immortality hereafter[x], or of its capability of happineſs or miſery; or to be at all in oppoſition to the language of the holy Scriptures. But if this be ſo, it needs not, it is plain, though ever ſo capable of proof, interfere either with our hopes or our faith. The queſtion indeed has been revived of late years, and the materiality of the ſoul ſtrongly inſiſted upon, for a particular end and purpoſe: a purpoſe, which ſeems to betray the cauſe it was meant to ſupport; namely, to overthrow the doctrines of the pre-exiſtence and divinity of Chriſt, as profeſſed by

[x] See *Hartley*, p. 303. concluſion of the firſt part of his *Obſervations on Man*; and *Prieſtley's Diſquiſitions*. See alſo *Dr. Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, vol. ii. p. 11. 5th edit.

the

the eſtabliſhed Church of theſe realms (n). But if theſe doctrines cannot be overthrown by a critical examination of the Scriptures, whence alone we profeſs to deduce them, we may ſurely well expect them to be proof againſt ſuch metaphyſical and abſtruſe diſquiſitions as the one alluded to.

Though it muſt ſtill be acknowledged then, that Reaſon, unenlightened by Revelation, muſt be wholly incompetent to ſolve ſuch queſtions as theſe; yet it may be of importance to us to be aſſured, that whatever advances ſhe may be ſuppoſed to have made in other branches of knowledge, her lateſt ſpeculations on the origin of evil, and the moral government of the world, ſo far from tending to remove any exiſting doubts and perplexities, have been more than ever uncertain and unſatisfactory; ſerving indeed to determine nothing, except perhaps that ſtrange contradiction, that men are capable of being in a ſtate of religion and morality, under a courſe of things entirely incompatible with either; for how can we be capaple of morality, where every motive muſt have a determinate effect, and we are not free to chooſe between two? And how can we

we be prepared to ſerve and worſhip God, as a good and gracious Being, when we are taught to believe, that he has placed us in this world, only "to live in wickedneſs, and "to ſuffer, and not to know wherefore?"

And this incompetency of Reaſon to certify us of the truth of ſuch important matters, (an incompetency actually capable of demonſtration,) muſt ſurely not only incline us to ſet but ſmall value on ſuch vain ſpeculations (12), but diſpoſe us the more readily to believe, that ſomewhere or other the true and authentic hiſtory of the origin of the world muſt have been always preſerved; that the hiſtory of man, from his firſt creation, muſt have been recorded; and that the only queſtion which really concerns us is, where is the truth to be found?

Now I believe thus much may be ſafely aſſerted, that if the Moſaic coſmogony is not the true one, few will be found to contend for any others that are extant; and therefore, if I ſhould appear to dwell longer on this part of my ſubject than is neceſſary, I hope it will be conſidered, that every thing which relates to revealed Religion depends ultimately on the authenticity of the Moſaic account

of

of the creation and *fall* of *man*. For, as to the Chriſtian Revelation, if we may truſt to the teſtimony not only of Prophets and Apoſtles, but of our Lord himſelf, it was certainly not more deſigned to carry us forward to the end of time, than backward to its beginning; the new revelation having continual reference and relation to the old. A connection, I muſt add, the more fit to be inſiſted upon at preſent, becauſe, in ſome very recent tranſactions on the continent, its importance has been in the moſt extraordinary manner diſputed, and the authority of the *Pentateuch* particularly called in queſtion.

I cannot conclude therefore this part of my Lecture, without earneſtly exhorting thoſe of my hearers, who may be at all liable to be led aſtray by the falſe philoſophy of the times, not to ſuffer themſelves to be deprived of the ancient and venerable account, which the Scriptures give of the firſt beginning of things, and more eſpecially of the origin of moral evil, till they have examined carefully into every circumſtance, that can be expected to throw light upon the ſubject. It is not the hiſtory of a ſingle unconnected

connected event, or of a *few ſuch*, as I remarked before, but of *many* events, cloſely, and I may add *marvellouſly* connected. And though it ſhould ſeem to reſemble, as an eminent Freethinker has aſſerted of it[y], "thoſe "fabulous accounts, which every nation "gives of its origin;" though *it ſhould be* "full of prodigies and miracles;" though it ſhould "give an account of a ſtate of the "world, and of human nature, entirely dif-"ferent from the preſent[z]," of "our fall "from that ſtate;" of the "age of man ex-"tending to near a thouſand years;" and of "the deſtruction of the world by a deluge;" let us remember, that if it is a record of that high authority, and that great antiquity, which we ſuppoſe it to be, then theſe are the very things we might expect to find in it: a ſtate of the world certainly different from the preſent, and a ſtate of human nature entirely ſo, as well as of our fall from it; for nothing leſs can account for the *preſent* ſtate of theſe things. Changes and revolutions there muſt have been, or the

[y] Hume.

[z] See *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, vol. ii. Letter xxviii. p. 98.

work

work of God will appear to have been originally and radically imperfect. Prodigies and miracles alſo we might expect to read of, if we will but conſider the Pagan accounts of their own groſs idolatries; by means of which, without prodigies and miracles, the true God would for ever perhaps have been excluded from this world of his own making: and as to the longevity of the patriarchal ages, and the deſtruction of the world by a deluge, they are not only ſupported by other hiſtorical teſtimonies of much repute, as is well known [a], but the latter eſpecially is, as it is my intention to ſhew in a future Diſcourſe, in a very extraordinary manner confirmed by phyſical obſervations.

[a] Vid. *Joſeph. Antiq. Jud.* lib. i. c. 3. *Grotius de Veritate R. Chriſt.* c. 16. and *Dr. Adams's Anſwer to Hume.* See alſo *Faber's Horæ Moſaicæ*, vol. i. p. 119. and ſect. 1. ch. iv. on the Deluge.

NOTES TO SERMON IV.

Page 154. *note* (1).

THE particulars of the account may to ſuperficial enquirers appear allegorical, &c.] All profane hiſtories, which aſcend ſo high as to the origin of the world and of mankind, are ſo fabulous and abſurd, and ſo little to be regarded as authentic in their preſent dreſs, that we cannot be ſurpriſed that thoſe who are diſpoſed to regard the Moſaic coſmogony in the ſame light as other ancient hiſtories, ſhall look for *fable*, when it treats of ſuch remote and primæval matters.

I have already admitted that an air of mythology runs through the Moſaic hiſtory of the geneſis and fall of man: but I have intimated at the ſame time, what is certainly the truth, that the firſt origin of things muſt have been in every particular not only ſo different from, but in ſome inſtances ſo *contrary* to preſent experience, [ſee *Campbell on Miracles*, pp. 212, 213. and *Wallace's various Proſpects of Mankind*,] that the trueſt poſſible account *muſt* to *us* have *appeared* mythological. Nothing is more mythological to read of, perhaps, than a miracle: but it is capable of poſitive demonſtration, that the world *could not have exiſted* without *many miracles*. See *Campbell* as above.

It may have been an ingenious device, and a very artful one, of the Pagans, to pretend to reſolve their mythologies into allegories; for nothing elſe could poſſibly excuſe the groſſneſs and abſurdity of moſt of them. [See them admirably expoſed for their attempts, by Arnobius in his 5th book *contr. Gentes*.] But to ſuppoſe that there is no hiſtory of the firſt beginning of things, but what is *both* mythological and *fabulous*, is, on many accounts, exceedingly unwiſe, and contrary to Reaſon.

Much

Much ill, I apprehend, has arisen from an injudicious manner of beginning our researches. Many are too apt to think, that it is only the veracity of Moses that is concerned in the real character and authenticity of the first three chapters of Genesis; and they seem to regard it as a matter of perfect indifference, whether he wrote what is there written, of the origin of man and of evil, mythologically, allegorically, or historically; whether he was really the author of them, or only the collector of antiquated traditions, and fanciful legends; or whether indeed he had any thing at all to do with them. This was certainly the case with Dr. Geddes, and is the case with many German commentators of the present day, particularly M. Teller of Berlin, Eichhorn, Heizelmann, Crugel, &c. who all agree in treating the first three chapters of Genesis as fabulous, but with little agreement among themselves in other respects. Thus M. Teller thinks the second and third chapters *more ancient* than the *first*, while M. Eichhorn thinks the latter the most ancient of the three; a difference of opinion which affects M. Teller's chief argument; who contends, that the *first* chapter is *allegorical*, but the others *hieroglyphical*, and for that reason more ancient. In fact, they know nothing at all about them; which must be the case with all who pretend to judge of them, merely as the introduction to an ancient book.

The true way for a Christian to consider the matter, is to begin with the testimony of our *Saviour*, and the *Apostolic writers*, to the truth of this very ancient account of things. If we have any authentic information in regard to the *end* of the world, and the *future* hopes and expectations of man, it is unquestionably only in the Gospel of Jesus Christ; in the Evangelical histories and writings of the Apostles; in our Lord's own declarations, and the inspired evidence of his Disciples. Now if this information is "*from above*," shall we suppose that our Lord himself and his holy Apostles were ignorant of man's true *beginning*, or would have purposely and expressly connected the heavenly and sublime doctrines they had to communicate, with a parcel of Chaldæan and Egyptian fables? for so M. Teller regards them; M. Eichhorn, &c. Dr. Geddes also,

alſo, and Dr. Prieſtley; much to their diſgrace, as *Chriſtians*, at all events.

The more the Moſaic account may ſeem to us mythological in ſtyle and matter, the more cautious we ſhould be how we regard it as ſuch, when we know of a ſurety, that not only St. Paul, but our Saviour referred to it, in the moſt ſolemn and ſtriking manner. "For as in *Adam* all die," ſaith St. Paul, "*even ſo* in "CHRIST ſhall all be made alive!" "The *firſt man* "*Adam* was made a living ſoul; the *laſt Adam* was "made a quickening ſpirit." "The firſt man is of the "earth, earthy; the laſt man is the LORD from HEA-"VEN!" 1 Cor. xv. What ſhould we think of St. Paul, if, in this moſt ſolemn manner, he had ventured to bring into compariſon, our Saviour and Prometheus, or any other truly mythological perſonage? Or, when our bleſſed SAVIOUR reminds the Phariſees, "Have ye not read, that HE which made them in the "beginning, made them male and female; and *ſaid*, "For this cauſe ſhall a man leave father and mother, "and ſhall cleave to his wife, and they twain ſhall be "one fleſh:" that he had no truer hiſtory in view than a mere Oriental legend? Let us remember alſo, that, according to common ideas, and the uſual courſe of things, this reference was to the *moſt mythological part*, perhaps, of the whole relation.

When we ſhall have ſatisfied ourſelves of the manifeſt unreaſonableneſs, and indeed the groſs impiety, of ſuppoſing that our Saviour and his holy Apoſtles could make ſuch ſolemn appeals to a mere mythological tale, "popular traditions and old ſongs," (as Dr. Geddes is pleaſed to call them,) let us conſider what are the circumſtances which render the Pagan mythologies in general ſo offenſive. Are they not, that they give us very unbecoming notions of the Divine Nature, as well as of the interference of Providence in the affairs of men? But how do we find the Divine Nature repreſented in the reſt of the Moſaic writings, and the other books of the Old Teſtament? moſt of them certainly written in times ſo remote, as to be ſtigmatized as eminently rude and barbarous: moſt of them the works, according to Mr. Hume, of "an ignorant and "barbarous people, written in an age when they were

" ſtill more barbarous." See his *Eſſays*. " Shall we " aſſert," he goes on to ſay, " that in more ancient " times, before the knowledge of letters, or the diſ- " covery of any art or ſcience, men entertained the " principles of pure *Theiſm?* that is, while they were " ignorant and barbarous, they diſcovered *truth?*" *Eſſays*, vol. ii. 417.

The advocate for the inſpiration of the Jewiſh Scriptures might thank Mr. Hume for this remark. The very remote and incomparable antiquity of the Bible is not to be diſputed: conſult *Joſephus*, *Philo*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Grotius*, *Stillingfleet*, &c. &c. Nevertheleſs therein are to be found innumerable deſcriptions of the Deity, not only the moſt ſublime, but the moſt juſt and appropriate that can be conceived. " Nous voyons " avec la plus grande certitude hiſtorique," ſay the Jews in their memorial to M. Teller, " que Moïſe " trouva *déjà* chez les *premiers peres* de *ſa* nation, comme " un héritage *reſpectable*, des dogmes *purs*, et des prin- " cipes de religion clairs et dégagés de toute Idolâtrie, " et de tout Athéiſme. Ces *Patriarches* avoient ſur- " tout cherché à conſerver la doctrine d'un Dieu ſpi- " rituel, imperceptible aux ſens. Nous ne trouvons " cette doctrine dans la même pureté chez aucune au- " tre nation." Mr. Hume thinks the truth could not have been diſcovered ſo early as the times of Moſes: the Jews of Berlin think they were diſcovered much earlier. Mr. Hume is not to be excuſed for his want of diſcernment, or want of honeſty, in pretending that the Bible does not contain the principles of pure Theiſm: the Pruſſian Jews are not to be excuſed for their dulneſs, in not regarding ſuch correct ideas of the Divine Nature, as a certain proof of the inſpiration of the ſacred Writings. What indeed Mr. Hume's ideas of pure Theiſm were, it may be difficult to ſay: but there is little doubt that he would have objected to the ſacred books, as far as they repreſent God to be infinitely ſuperior to mankind; for this muſt have the fault he cenſures, of *checking* all *rivalſhip* and *emulation* on the part of *man*, to the loſs of *all the virtues that aggrandiſe a people*, including particularly "activity, ſpirit, courage, magnanimity, " and love of liberty." Theſe qualities, it ſeems, are only compatible with a religion, in which the gods are conceived

conceived to be little better and little ſuperior to man, as in all the Pagan ſyſtems. Another recommendation the Pagan ſyſtems poſſeſs over the ſacred books, in Mr. Hume's idea; they allow us "to be more at eaſe in "our addreſſes to ſuch deities." See his *Natural Hiſtory of Religion*, §. x. p. 454; a work more calculated to prove the abſolute neceſſity of revelation than almoſt any I ever peruſed; though certainly written with a deſign as oppoſite as poſſible.

Joſephus, with great propriety, challenges his readers to examine thoroughly into the matter, and to ſay whether Moſes had not invariably aſcribed to the Deity, not only his proper nature, but actions ſuitable to that nature; free from all the vanities and abſurdities of the Pagan mythologies; though he lived in times ſo remote, as to have been at liberty to invent, had he ſeen fit; "for he lived," ſays he, "full two thou-"ſand years ago, a diſtance of time to which the "poets dare not carry up the birth of their gods, the "actions of their anceſtors, or the eſtabliſhment of "their laws." The paſſage is very remarkable. *Ἤδη τοίνυν τὰς ἐντευξομένας τοῖς βιβλίοις παρακαλῶ τὴν γνώμην Θεῷ προσανέχειν, καὶ δοκιμάζειν τὸν ἡμέτερον Νομοθέτην, εἰ τὴν τε φύσιν αὐτῷ ἀξίως κατενόησε, καὶ τῇ δυνάμει πρεπόντας ἀεὶ τὰς πράξεις ἀνέθηκε,* ΠΑΣΗΣ ΚΑΘΑΡΟΝ ΤΟΝ ΠΕΡΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΦΥΛΑΞΑΣ ΛΟΓΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΡ' ΑΛΛΟΙΣ ΑΣΧΗΜΟΝΟΣ ΜΥΘΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ· *Καίτοιγε, ὅσον ἐπὶ μήκει χρόνου καὶ παλαιότητι, πολλὴν ἔχων ἄδειαν ψεύδων πλασμάτων· γέγονεν γὰρ πρὸ ἐτῶν δισχιλίων, ἐφ' ὅσον πλῆθος αἰῶνος ἐδ' αὐτῶν οἱ ποιηταὶ τὰς γενέσεις τῶν Θεῶν, μήτιγε τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων πράξεις, ἢ τὰς νόμους ἀνενεγκεῖν ἐτόλμησαν. Ant. Jud.* lib. i. p. 3.

Notwithſtanding this, Mr. Paine is pleaſed to aſſert, in his *Age of Reaſon*, (and I cannot forbear to record it, as a ſtanding reproach to his taſte and diſcernment, and no unequivocal ſign of his great ignorance,) that "al-"moſt the only parts in the book called the Bible, that "convey to us *any* idea of God, are ſome chapters in "Job and the ſixth Pſalm."—"I *recollect no other*; "thoſe parts are true deiſtical compoſitions; for they "treat of the Deity through his works; they are "founded upon natural philoſophy."

But is God to be regarded *only* as the *Creator* of the univerſe? merely as the efficient cauſe of the viſible

ſcene of things? Have we nothing to do with his providential government of the world, and the mode of his exiſtence? Other Deiſts are not ſo eaſily ſatisfied: they think it a great thing to be able to comprehend his moral and metaphyſical attributes; *unity*, *ſpirituality*, *omnipotence*, *ubiquity*, *infinity*, and, above all, his *goodneſs* and *mercy*. But ancient as the Bible is, and proud as modern Deiſts are of their firſt principles of theology, there is not one of theſe properties and attributes of the Divine Nature, which is not duly aſſigned to God in the writings of Moſes and the Prophets, in ſuch ſublimity of language, and with ſuch force of expreſſion, as, not only never have been exceeded, but, in the opinion of ſome of the moſt unexceptionable judges, never have been equalled. See *Lowth's Lectures on Hebrew Poetry*, Lect. I. *Addiſon's Evidences of the Chriſtian Religion*. See *Sir William Jones's* opinion in his *Anniverſary Diſcourſes* at Calcutta; *Biſhop Watſon's Apology*, pp. 136, 151, 208. and, for a compariſon between the Hebrew and Pagan deſcriptions of the Deity, *Richards's Bampton Lectures*, Serm. VI. Serm. VIII.

When we have ſatisfied ourſelves that St. Paul and others of the Apoſtles, and even Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, referred to the Moſaic coſmogony, as a true and literal hiſtory of the commencement of things—when we have duly weighed and conſidered the exceeding great abſurdity and impiety of ſuppoſing they could refer to nothing better than a mythological legend—when we have certified ourſelves that the beginning of the world, of man, and of evil, muſt have been ſo entirely different from the common courſe of things, and, as far as regards the creation of animals and vegetables, ſo independent of all ſecondary cauſes, as to be, in every ſenſe of the terms, *perfectly marvellous* and *miraculous*—when we have brought ourſelves to reflect, that, ſtrange and unuſual as the account may ſeem, every part of it is of ſo great importance, that we could not do without it, (for this I think demonſtrable, in reſpect to the origin of man, and the origin of evil—) *Then* we may be prepared to examine more minutely into the drift of the hiſtory, and to appreciate the peculiar importance of the ſeveral incidents.

It would be impoſſible to go through the whole, in a note,

a note, already perhaps too long: but I ſhall ſelect *two* of the incidents, becauſe they are particularly important if true, and have been particularly expoſed to ridicule on a ſuppoſition of their being falſe. The firſt is the creation of woman; the other, the law given to the Protoplaſts. The former is unqueſtionably of great importance, becauſe, as we have ſeen above, our Saviour referred to it, and to ſettle a very important point in the laws of ſociety. The ſecond is very important, becauſe no leſs than the introduction of ſin, and fall of the human race, and conſequently the redemption of mankind, are all intimately connected with it.

Firſt then, in regard to the creation of woman. That the ſecondary cauſes for the propagation of the ſpecies could not operate in the production of the firſt man, or the firſt woman, is moſt evident. But though it is a peculiar merit in the Moſaic coſmogony, that where ſecond cauſes could not be ſuppoſed to act, they are totally kept out of ſight; yet in regard to the creation of man and of woman, the ſacred Hiſtorian has entered more than in any other inſtance into the *modus operandi* of creation: and certainly not without reaſon. How the world in general was created, we need not be informed as to the exact *quomodo* of its formation and arrangement: but it is not to be concluded therefore, that we need not have been inſtructed in the *quomodo* of *man's* creation, or in that of the *woman*; for the *terreſtrial* nature of man's body, as diſtinct from the ſoul, and on which many important theological queſtions are known to depend, is thereby particularly ſhewn, and the identity of nature in the two ſexes expreſsly demonſtrated; the former being neceſſary not only to the due apprehenſion of man's nature, but the vindication of God's power and providence; for the terreſtrial nature of man's body became afterwards a leading dogma in profane philoſophy; whereupon the philoſophers always endeavoured to fix the origin of evil: ſo that it would ſeem to be moſt reaſonable that this diſtinction in the human nature ſhould have been particularly noticed. For to ſhew that God made man of the duſt of the ground, was a vindication of his power over matter, to which often has been attributed a neceſſary and independent exiſtence, which in after-times was particularly

the doctrine of the Stoics, as is well known. But to return to the origin of woman.

In the creation of the human ſpecies, there was a foundation to be laid for the future *ſociety* of the different members of it, and for the moral as well as phyſical union in particular of the two ſexes. Of two rational beings, to which ſhould the dominion of the new world be aſſigned? Was Adam to *inveſt himſelf* with the ſuperiority in virtue of his ſtrength and manhood? and was he to receive woman at the hands of his Maker, as he received the fowls of the air, and the beaſts of the field, as a being altogether inferior and diſtinct? Was it not better that every foundation of endearment ſhould be laid at the firſt; and, to obviate jealouſy and rivalry, and much more any undue aſſumption of ſuperiority, that there ſhould be an equality of rights, and the ſame manifeſt identity of nature, as was to be provided for in the after propagation of the ſpecies? Κρατεῖν δεῖ τὸν Ἄνδρα τῆς γυναικὸς, ſays Plutarch, οὐχ ὡς δεσπότην κτήματος, ἀλλ' ὡς ΨΥΧΗΝ ΣΩΜΑΤΟΣ, συμπαθοῦντα καὶ συμπεφυκότα τῇ εὐνοίᾳ. A ſentence, ſays Wollaſton, [*Religion of Nature*, 159.] which ought to be written in letters of gold!

And that there was ſuch occaſion for marking the identity of nature in this inſtance, we may particularly conclude from the reaſoning of Mr. Hume. "For," ſays he, "were there a ſpecies of creature intermingled "with men, which, though rational, were poſſeſſed of "ſuch inferior ſtrength, both of body and mind, that "they were incapable of all reſiſtance, the *neceſſary conſequence*, I think, is, that we ſhould be bound by the "law of humanity, to give gentle uſage to theſe creatures; but ſhould not, properly ſpeaking, lie under *any* "*reſtraint* of *juſtice* with regard to them; nor could "they poſſeſs any right or property excluſive of ſuch "*arbitrary* lords." *Eſſays*, vol. ii. 256, 257.

It could not be of importance to the brute irrational animals to be certified of this identity of nature ſo particularly; [ſee the *Summa* of St. Thomas, P. I. Quæſt. xcii. art. 2.] but the phyſical inſtincts and appetites, which would guide *them* to what was right, were not likely in mankind to be the foundation of all thoſe moral virtues, and chaſte affections, on which the good

good of ſociety in general, and the happineſs of private life more particularly, were to depend: and therefore I look upon the whole to be fully and adequately explained in the 23d and 24th verſes of the ſecond chapter, to which our Saviour alluded in the paſſage already referred to. Matth. xix. 4, 5, 6. ſee alſo Mark x. 6, 7. There I find the divine inſtitution of marriage, and all the private virtues and charities flowing therefrom: there I find "God's beſt gift to mankind;" that union of ſouls, and intereſts; that participation of pains and pleaſures; which tend to heighten all the enjoyments, and mitigate all the ſorrows of life; and which expanding itſelf in the propagation, nurture, and education of children, lays the foundation for every comfort and ſecurity derivable from ſociety.

But none of theſe things can have their proper foundation in a *mere fable*. No allegory, no poetical *muthos*, could poſſibly ſerve our purpoſe. Dr. Geddes could derive all theſe things equally with ourſelves from the Moſaic coſmogony: but in treating the latter as a mere fable, he totally and entirely deſtroys its uſe; beſides contradicting St. Paul, and invalidating or rendering void his whole argument. 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9.

See, as to the peculiar appointment of woman's creation, *Leſlie's Works*, vol. i. 242. *Theodoretus* περὶ Προνοίας, Λογ. ζ'. 141. *Dr. Prieſtley's Compariſon of the Inſtitutions of Moſes and the Hindoos*, p. 153. and *Dr. Jamieſon's Hiſtory of the Pentateuch*.

I have dwelt the longer on this, becauſe it is almoſt alleged to be the very reaſon of M. Teller's infidelity, as to the truth of the three firſt chapters of Geneſis; for he thus excuſes himſelf: "Voilà ſur quoi il faut prendre "parti, à moins de vouloir donner gain de cauſe aux "*railleries* fines et *groſſieres* des ennemis de la Religion. "Combien de fois n'a-t-on pas tourné en ridicule *la* "*côte d'Adam ?*" To which M. de Luc very properly anſwers, "Quand on ne ſait pas mépriſer le *ridicule dé-*"*raiſonnable*, on mérite d'être victime;" and then proceeds to ſtate the extreme folly of pretending to object, where we have no means whatever of deciding the caſe: "Il eſt évident qu'on ne ſauroit rien affirmer ni "nier *à priori* ſur la maniere de la création, ſoit en géné-"ral, ſoit dans aucune de ſes parties."

I proceed now to the law given to the Protoplaſts, which has been regarded as hieroglyphical, allegorical, and wholly fabulous; and which, if we were in all caſes ignominiouſly to give way to raillery and ridicule, would be among the firſt parts of the Moſaic records to be abandoned. That "the whole human race ſhould "be condemned for eating an *apple*," is an old taunt, and will, no doubt, perpetually be revived, becauſe it is certainly according to the letter of the Scripture, except indeed as to the abſurd and groundleſs deſignation of the particular fruit. The law is thought trifling: why ſo? Can the wilful tranſgreſſion of any expreſs command of God be ſo? But what if murder, theft, adultery, or perjury, had been forbidden? would not this have been an uſeleſs and unneceſſary ſuggeſtion of moral diſorder in a ſtate of perfect innocence, which might have been preſerved? Beſides, how were any of theſe crimes poſſible? or how indeed, as ſtated already in another place, could *any* of the *laws* of the *Decalogue* be brought to apply to the ſituation of the Protoplaſts? Theſe things are certainly not ſufficiently thought of, when men object to this particular part of the Moſaic hiſtory. Whatever was the law, the tranſgreſſion of Adam might be proved to be, a *complication* of ſins. [See *Edwards's Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm*, Diſc. II. p. 34.] At all events, if the offence be conſidered as trifling, it is a good remark which one author makes, that, "in-"ſtead of contending againſt God for ordaining the for-"feiture of what he gave them, for ſuch a trifle of of-"fence, the proper argument is certainly againſt our firſt "parents, for not fulfilling ſuch a real trifle of obedience, "where there had been ſuch magnificence of favour." *New Theory of Redemption*, vol. i. 162. The ſame author in another place obſerves, "Nor is it the leaſt "ſurpriſing that immortality was forfeited by one of-"fence, when the obſervance of one ſingle circum-"ſtance was the only thing required in order to its "preſervation."

In ſhort, when all the circumſtances of the caſe are fairly taken into account, (many of which cannot be adverted to at preſent,) we ſhall ſurely be brought readily to acquieſce in the opinion of the learned Biſhop Bull, that "this precept to Adam was no ſuch ſlight

"and

" and eaſy precept as ſome have fancied; but was at " once a bridle to the deliciouſneſs of his ſenſe, and a " check to the curioſity of his reaſon; a great experi- " ment of his ſelf-denial, and in general a call to the " divine life"—That it laid " a far greater reſtraint on " man's *rational* appetite; for the tree forbidden was by " God himſelf ſtyled the tree of *knowledge*; and it was " a motive that ſeduced Eve, that the fruit of it was " good to make one wiſe." *Sermons*, vol. iii. 1087. 1089. See alſo the *Summa Theologiæ* of St. Thomas, Part III. Quæſt. clxiii. Art. 1. and *Parad. Loſt.* b. vii. 543. b. viii. 323. " Οὐ κενοῖς ἐπιστεύσαμεν μύθοις, οὐδὲ ἀναποδείκ- " τοις λόγοις, ἀλλὰ μεστοῖς Πνεύματος θείᾳ, καὶ δυνάμει βρύουσι, καὶ " τεθήλοσι χάριτι." Juſt. Mart. Dial. cum Tryphone.

Page 156. *note* (2).

In this caſe a cloſe ſtudy of the volume of nature, &c. terminated in Atheiſm.] It cannot be ſuppoſed that I mean to inſinuate, that a ſtudy of nature is *likely* in general to lead to Atheiſm. I have adduced the fact alluded to, only to ſhew how incomparably ſuperior the light of Revelation is, to the caſual, variable, and often perverſe deductions of Reaſon; and how indiſpenſably neceſſary its *authority* is, to eſtabliſh the truth and certainty of ſome of the moſt important principles of religion and morality: even indeed, of the very being and exiſtence of God! And as it is the principal object of theſe Lectures to ſhew, that, in this boaſted age of Reaſon, we are not arrived at any greater certainty as to thoſe matters, than heretofore, how can this be better proved than from the declarations and conceſſions of Infidels themſelves? I have therefore thought it not amiſs to ſhew whither Reaſon may conduct us, when reſtrained by no authority, and ſenſible of no ſuperior. And while Voltaire, and Rouſſeau, and Helvetius; Hume, Gibbon, and Paine, have been endeavouring to convert men, as they would term it, from Religion to Reaſon, from Chriſtianity to Deiſm, under a pretence that our Reaſon is light ſufficient, and cannot fail to ſecure us in all due obedience to God, and love to man, it may be well to know that their cotemporary, friend, and aſſociate, Diderot, thought himſelf able, by the *very ſame means* they

they would have adopted to convert a man from Chriſtianity to Deiſm, to convert him further, from Deiſm to *Atheiſm*, viz. *a ſtudy of nature*, and an appeal to our own feelings and judgment. For the requiſites he inſiſts on are expreſsly as follow: "La réflexion; de l'é-"tude, des connoiſſances; une longue chaine d'expé-"riences; l'*habitude de contempler la nature*, la ſcience "des vraies cauſes de ſes phénomenes divers; de ſes "combinaiſons, de ſes loix; des êtres qui les compo-"ſent, et de leurs différentes propriétés—Pour être "*Athée*, il faut l'avoir *Meditée!*" *Syſtême de la Nature*, ch. xiii. Part II.

Are not theſe the very qualifications which the Deiſt would inſiſt upon, as invariably ſufficient to prove the exiſtence and attributes of God? But how are men to be expected to agree in any concluſions to be drawn from a view of nature, when Spinoza could ſo exclude final cauſes, as to ridicule it as a childiſh fancy to think, that eyes were deſigned to ſee with, teeth to chew with, the ſun to give light, &c. &c.? How are men to be expected to form correct notions of the Deity without Revelation, when Mr. Hume inſiſts upon it, in his Natural Hiſtory of Religion, that polytheiſm and idolatry *muſt have been* the primitive religion of *uninſtructed* man? when Lord Bolingbroke aſſerts, that "the firſt "true principles of all theology could not be eſta-"bliſhed till the manhood of philoſophy?" and when Lord Shafteſbury could take the pains to arrange and claſſify the many different opinions men might come to entertain concerning Providence, ſeparately or mixed; as, firſt, they might be ſimply *Theiſts*; *Atheiſts*; *Polytheiſts*; *Dæmoniſts*: or theſe might be mixed; as, firſt, *Theiſm with Dæmoniſm*; ſecondly, *Dæmoniſm with Polytheiſm*, &c. &c. See the whole in his *Enquiry concerning Virtue*, Part I. §. 2.

Nor, if Voltaire, Helvetius, &c. had known what they were about, could they have ſuppoſed, that they were better advocates for the ſufficiency of Reaſon. For thus does the former contradict himſelf, in his Poem on *Natural Religion*:

"Je *ne puis ignorer* ce qu'*ordonna* mon maître;
"Il m'a donné ſa loi, puiſqu'il m'a donné l'être:

"La

" La morale *uniforme*, en tout *temps*, en tout *lieu*,
" A des ſiecles ſans fin, nous parle au nom de Dieu."

Afterwards, ſpeaking of the Chineſe, Tartars, &c. he ſays,

" *Différents* dans leurs *mœurs*, ainſi qu'en leurs *hommages*,
" Ils lui font tous tenir un différent langage.
" Tous ſe ſont donc trompés"——

The poem concludes with a prayer, which begins,

" O Dieu, qu'on *meconnoît*, ô Dieu, que tout annonce!"

Helvetius alſo, though forward to aſſure his fellow-creatures that they require no guide, nor need any ſupernatural inſtruction, ſays of the preſent ſcene of things, " Les Vérités ſont par la main du ciel ſemées " ça et là, dans une *forêt obſcure*, et *ſans route*. Un " chemin borde cette forêt; il eſt fréquenté par une " infinité de voyageurs. Parmi eux il eſt des curieux, à " qui l'épaiſſeur et l'obſcurité même du bois inſpirent " le deſir d'y pénétrer: ils y entrent; mais embarraſſés " dans les ronces, déchirés par les épines, et rebutés dès " les premiers pas, ils abandonnent l'entrepriſe, et re- " gagnent le chemin." *De l'Homme*, vol. ii. 307.

Rouſſeau's confeſſion and acknowledgment of his own ignorance we have already noticed, Note 1. Diſc. II. But all theſe advocates for Natural Religion are, and ever have been, notoriouſly inconſiſtent in regard to the ſufficiency of human Reaſon. See Dr. Leland's admirable *Reply* to *Tindal's Chriſtianity as old as the Creation*; and his *View of Deiſtical Writers*, Letters ix. xxvi.

Page 159. *note* (3).

The Socinians, and modern Unitarians, as they ſtyle themſelves.] Mr. Fuller, in his compariſon of the Calviniſtic and Socinian ſyſtems, very reaſonably excuſes himſelf for applying generally the name Socinian to the Anti-Trinitarians, in the following terms: " The " reaſon why the term *Socinian* is preferred in the fol- " lowing Letters to that of *Unitarians*, is not for the " mean purpoſe of reproach, but becauſe the latter " name is not a *fair* one. The term, as conſtantly ex- " plained by themſelves, ſignifies thoſe profeſſors of " Chriſtianity, who worſhip ONE GOD. But this is not " that

" that wherein they can be *allowed* to be diſtinguiſhed " from others; for what profeſſors of Chriſtianity are " there, who profeſs to worſhip a plurality of Gods? " Trinitarians profeſs to be Unitarians alſo: they, as " well as their opponents, believe there is but *one God*. " To give Socinians this name therefore *excluſively*, " would be granting them the very point, which they " ſeem ſo deſirous to take for granted; that is to ſay, " the point in debate." *Preface*, p. ix.

Page 160. *note* (4).

We are not free to act, nor free to chooſe, nor free to deliberate about our choice, &c.] " Voici comment on peut " réduire la queſtion de la liberté de l'homme: la li- " berté ne ſe peut rapporter à aucune des fonctions " connues de notre ame. Car l'ame, au moment où " elle agit, ne peut agir autrement; au moment où elle " choiſit, ne peut délibérer autrement; au moment " qu'elle veut, ne peut vouloir autrement, parce qu'une " choſe ne peut exiſter et ne point exiſter en même " tems. Or, c'eſt ma volonté telle qu'elle eſt qui me fait " délibérer; c'eſt ma délibération telle qu'elle eſt qui " me fait choiſir; c'eſt mon choix tel qu'il eſt qui me " fait agir; c'eſt ma détermination telle qu'elle eſt qui " me fait exécuter ce que ma délibération m'a fait " choiſir; et je n'ai délibéré que parce que j'ai eu des " motifs qui m'ont fait délibérer, et parce qu'il n'étoit " pas poſſible que je ne vouluſſe pas délibérer. Ainſi la " liberté ne ſe trouve ni dans la volonté, ni dans la dé- " libération, ni dans le choix, ni dans l'action; quand " donc peut-elle exercer ſa liberté? C'eſt aux théolo- " giens à nous le dire." *Syſtême de la Nature*, vol. i. 221. Note. But are not *deliberation* and *choice* at leaſt *uſeleſs* in a ſyſtem of *neceſſity?*

The continual inconſiſtencies, into which thoſe writers fall who would ſupport the doctrine of neceſſity, may be ſeen as well as any where in that atheiſtical work. The xivth and xvth chapters ſeem to be in complete contradiction to the xiiith. In the latter the author *recommends* fataliſm, becauſe " c'eſt le Fataliſte qui doit " être *humble* et modéré par *principe*; (we are not inclined to diſpute this conſequence; Dr. Hartley alſo ſtrongly inſiſts upon it;) " n'eſt-il pas forcé de recon- " noître

" noître qu'il ne poſſede rien qu'il n'ait reçu ?" Certainly: but in ch. xiv. the author quarrels with the *ſuperſtitious*, (that is, the *religioniſts*, who teach the doctrine of future rewards and puniſhments,) and urges on the other hand, that man be taught to lay aſide all ſuch vain fears; " qu'il apprenne à *s'eſtimer* lui-même; " qu'il ait l'*ambition* de *mériter* l'eſtime des autres." We are exhorted not to concern ourſelves about " no- " tre ſort à venir," but *ſeek* to be uſeful to our cotemporaries and poſterity; " qu'un *amour légitime* de *nous-* " *mêmes* nous faſſe gouter d'avance le charme des lou- " anges que nos voulons *mériter*; et, lorſque nous en " ſommes *dignes*, apprenons à *nous aimer*, à *nous eſtimer* " *nous-mêmes*." This is for thoſe, who by the natural conſequence of the ſyſtem are " forcés de reconnoître " qu'ils ne poſſedent *rien* qu'ils n'aient reçu :" that is, either phyſically or *morally*, for ſo the whole work imports. Dr. Hartley's expreſſion is, that the ſyſtem of fataliſm muſt produce the " moſt profound humility " and ſelf-annihilation, ſince according to it we are " entirely deſtitute of all power and perfection in our- " ſelves." This very learned and pious author indeed refers what we *have* to the grace and goodneſs of God; but the author of the *Syſtême de la Nature*, only to the accidental motions and combinations of matter. But to proceed. The character of the virtuous man is thus deſcribed: " L'intérêt de l'homme vertueux eſt de *mé-* " *riter* par *ſa conduite l'amour* et *l'approbation* des au- " tres, et de ne *rien faire* qui *puiſſe* le *dégrader* à *ſes* " *propres yeux*." And in his definition of Virtue, he ſays, " La vertu n'eſt que l'*art de ſe rendre heureux ſoi-* " *même de la félicité des autres*." Of the virtuous man he alſo thus ſpeaks, in another place: " Quand l'univers " entier ſeroit injuſte pour l'homme du bien, il lui reſte " l'avantage de *s'aimer*, de *s'eſtimer lui-même: nulle* " *force ne peut lui ravir l'eſtime méritée* par *lui-même*."

In his xviith chapter he reproves thoſe who are weak enough to think the ſoul capable " de réſiſter les im- " pulſions de ſes organes, &c." But in his vindication of penal laws, he ſuppoſes the caſe of perſons " aſſez mal " conſtitués pour *réſiſter* aux motifs qui agiſſent ſur " tous les autres." Speaking of *ſuicide*, the author ſays this is lawful and *natural*, when pains and troubles beſet

ſet us; and his *proof* muſt be admitted to be *irreſiſtible!* For the *ſame nature*, ſays he, that by a courſe of fatality brings theſe diſtreſſes upon us, "a travaillé pendant "des milliers d'années à former, dans le ſein de la "terre, le fer qui *doit* trancher nos jours!!!" Could any one ſuppoſe that the very ſame writer who brings theſe heavy charges againſt *nature*, ſhould yet in expreſs terms have affirmed, "L'on ne peut trop le répéter, "c'eſt dans l'erreur que nous trouverons la vraie ſource "des maux dont la race humaine eſt affligée; *ce n'eſt* "*point la nature* qui la rendit malheureuſe." Part. I. c. 16. Again. "Une *nature* qui *s'obſtine* à rendre notre "exiſtence *malheureuſe*, nous *ordonne* d'en ſortir; en "mourant nous rempliſſons un de ſes décrets." Samſon, Eleazar, le Meſſie, and all the Chriſtian martyrs, were, it ſeems, ſuicides! And yet, according to the ſame author, thoſe are not ſuicides who expoſe themſelves to the loſs of life for the good of the community. In his *excuſe* for *ſuicide* he is for once conſiſtent: "Si l'homme "n'eſt libre dans aucun inſtant de ſa vie, il l'eſt encore "bien moins dans l'acte qui la termine." But what then becomes of the very term *ſuicide?*

Such are a very few only of the numberleſs inconſiſtencies this author falls into; but there is not one that is not common to all other writers upon the ſubject. I ſhall only take notice of one thing more at preſent, becauſe it concerns thoſe who think a ſyſtem of ſtrict neceſſity conſiſtent with moral reſponſibility, and a ſtate of future rewards and puniſhments. "S'il eſt "*juſte*," (it is God he is ſpeaking of,) "comment croire "qu'il puniſſe des créatures qu'il a remplies de foi-"bleſſes?" Let it be remarked, that this is the obſervation of a rigid Fataliſt. *Our* anſwer certainly is, that the wicked do not ſin through any weakneſs. But how *other Fataliſts* will anſwer it, we know not.

Page 161. *note* (5).

The aſſaſſin can no more help the murder he commits, than the dagger can, which he employs.] So ſays Mr. Godwin in one place: but in another he argues, that there would be no injuſtice in thruſting a drawn ſword againſt the boſom of a friend, *except* that the neceſſary connection of cauſes and effects had taught *us to foreſee* that

that the ſword would wound. Are we to ſuppoſe then, that the dagger of a murderer is as capable of foreſeeing this conſequence, as the murderer himſelf? If not, the murderer may be *guilty of an injuſtice* in the act, which muſt conſtitute a moſt eſſential difference. But we ſhall be reminded, that Mr. Godwin's principle only is, that the murderer could no more *help the murder* he commits, than the dagger he employs, &c. becauſe the motives that govern him are irreſiſtible. But why has not the motive ariſing from the certain and neceſſary foreſight of no wound being inflicted, except the dagger is ſo employed, as ſtrong as any oppoſite motive? Is there no room in the ſcheme of the Fataliſt for a *preference?* Certainly there is, for Mr. Godwin aſſures us ſo. "The doctrine of neceſſity," ſays he, "does not overturn the nature of things. Happineſs "and miſery, wiſdom and error, will ſtill be diſtinct, "and there will ſtill be a connection between them. "*Wherever* there is a *diſtinction*, there is ground for "*preference* and deſire, or, on the *contrary*, for neglect "and averſion. If therefore by virtue we mean *that* "principle, which aſſerts the *preference* of happineſs "and wiſdom to miſery and error, its reality will re"main undiminiſhed by the doctrine of neceſſity." *Pol. Juſt.* B. iv. ch. 8. Nay, preference in one place is made the very characteriſtic of virtue. "Virtue, con"ſidered as a perſonal quality, conſiſts in the *diſpoſition* "*of mind*, and may be defined a deſire to promote the "benefit of intelligent beings in general; the quantity "of virtue being as the quantity of deſire. Now deſire "is another name for *preference*." B. iv. ch. 5.

In another place Mr. Godwin defines virtuous conduct to be a "conduct *propoſing* to itſelf a certain end." The definition is good: but what ſhall we ſay to the argument that follows; that no otherwiſe than a knife has a capacity of cutting, has man a capacity of walking? So that a knife that cuts well, is a knife that propoſes to itſelf to cut ſharply!

Page 161. *note* (6).

It is in vain to plead any diſtinction between rational and mechanical motives.] See upon this ſubject *Dr. Prieſtley's Free Diſcuſſion of the Doctrines of Materialiſm*; in

in which, not only the Doctor's own arguments in support of his syſtem are given at length, but the anſwers and remarks of his friend Dr. Price. As Dr. Prieſtley was himſelf the editor of this work, we may naturally conclude that he thought he had the beſt of the argument: but we think it can ſcarce poſſibly appear ſo to any perſon elſe in the whole world. Dr. Price's anſwers and objections are invariably ſtrong and pertinent, and many appear to us to be ſo concluſive, as to admit of no poſſible reply. Dr. Prieſtley would inſiſt upon it, that the advocate for free will, in profeſſing a freedom of action, profeſſes to act without motive; and therefore can feel no remorſe, nor even give offence. "For," ſays he, "what can a man have to blame himſelf for, "when he acted *without motive*, and from no fixed "principle, good or bad? And what occaſion has he "for pardon, who never meant to give offence?" But if a man refuſes to be governed by a good motive, ſuch inaction alone might amount to offence; much more if he reſiſts it, or acts in direct oppoſition to it. What motive ought to be greater than the will of God? Yet, how many neglect, and how many even openly oppoſe his commandments? But conſult his *Free Diſcuſſion*, pp. 307, 308. Dr. Price makes an admirable diſtinction of motives in his reply. According to him, motives are only certain reaſons, on the view of which, or certain rules and perceptions, according to which, the mind determines *itſelf*. According to Dr. Prieſtley and other Fataliſts, they are ſubſtances, which operate mechanically on the mind, and leave it no dominion over its determination. p. 342. See this point well argued in an *Eſſay on Liberty and Neceſſity*, by Philaretus, in anſwer to Toplady, pp. 90, 91. See alſo Clarke's excellent *Reply to Leibnitz*, as to his adopted compariſon of a balance. Conſult alſo the xxiſt chapter and the former part of the xxiiid chapter of the *Philocalia of Origen*; where a good account is given of the conſiſtency of the freedom of man with God's over-ruling providence, and many paſſages of Scripture are reconciled.

Page 162. *note* (7).

We are taught to look upon this only as a deception.] Notwithſtanding the eminent piety of Dr. Hartley, I cannot

cannot get over the reflection, which his syſtem ſeems to caſt on the Deity, in the diſtinction he makes between the popular and philoſophical language upon the head of free-will; a diſtinction Dr. Prieſtley is very eager to inſiſt upon. That the popular language may ſerve to convey to us juſt ideas of men's actions, as far as they *ſuppoſe* themſelves to be free agents, we can readily admit; but that the ſame will ſerve to vindicate God's providence, we cannot allow. It would ſurely ſeem, that as by this ſcheme he would ſhew man to be only nominally, and not philoſophically *free*, by the ſame ſcheme he repreſents the Deity as only nominally, and by no means philoſophically, *juſt*, in the allotment of rewards and puniſhments.

Page 162. *note* (8.)

No circumſtances of character or diſpoſition, &c.] Character and diſpoſition ſeem to be ſtubborn obſtacles in the way of fataliſm. Let them be regarded as they will in many caſes, it would at leaſt appear, that one neceſſity muſt be oppoſed to another. A motive incapable of producing its *proper* and *natural* effect, muſt be hindered by ſome impediment; and in moral concerns ſuch impediment muſt often operate in the way of *reſiſtance*. The following expreſſions of Mr. Hume (ſee his *Diſſertation on the Paſſions*) ſeem ſurely to aſcribe ſomething to character quite independent of any neceſſary force of motives; for what ſhould *neceſſarily* govern us more than the view of the greateſt poſſible good, or the *ſenſe* of any preſent and preſſing uneaſineſs? His words are, "Men often act *knowingly* againſt "their intereſt: it is not therefore the view of the "greateſt poſſible good, which always influences them. "Men often *counteract* a *violent paſſion* in proſecution "of their diſtant intereſts and deſigns: it is not there-"fore the preſent uneaſineſs alone, which determines "them. In general we may obſerve, that both theſe "principles operate on the will; and where they are "contrary, that either of them prevails, according to "the *general character* and *diſpoſition* of the perſon." How far character or diſpoſition may check or fruſtrate the operation of motives, we read in another place. "If I have no *vanity*, I take no delight in praiſe. If I

" be void of ambition, power gives me no enjoyment. " If I be not angry, the punishment of an adversary is " totally indifferent to me," &c. *Essays*, vol. ii. 240.

Mr. Godwin, the pupil of Mr. Hume, or rather his echo upon this subject, says, the idea correspondent to the term *character* inevitably includes in it the *assumption* of necessary connection. This may be granted, without however excluding contingency. Mr. Godwin meets the objection, that " in giving advice, or pro- " posing arguments to a friend or neighbour, we make " a reserve for a certain faculty of liberty he *is supposed* " *to possess*, which may at last counteract the best di- " rected projects," by answering, that " in regard to " *matter* the same thing happens. When an experi- " ment fails, which had many times before succeeded, " the philosopher does not apprehend any liberty of " choice in his retort and materials, but the counter- " operation of some hidden cause." But what is this to the purpose? We are not to be told, that matter is no agent; that a retort has no free choice: the question is, whether *man* is an *agent*, and whether *himself* may not be the counteracting cause? But why does Mr. Godwin refer us to matter at all, if matter and spirit be identical? If they are *not identical*, *then* spirit may be active, though matter cannot be so; and thus Mr. Godwin's argument falls to the ground.

Mr. Hume considers it as a proof that all men have ever agreed in the doctrine of necessity, that a manufacturer reckons as surely upon the labour of his servants, as upon the tools which he employs. Assuredly; as far as he can be certain of the application of a given quantity of labour: but is he ever afraid of a combination among his tools, indicative of a *choice* and *option* whether they will work or no? Is he obliged to vary the obligations, by which his tools, at different times, are compelled to perform the task assigned them? Mr. Godwin also indeed asserts, that " a labourer no more " suspects that his employer will alter his mind, and " not pay him his daily wages, than he suspects that " his tools will *refuse* to perform those functions to- " day, in which they were yesterday employed with " success." Whoever is wise enough to conclude it to be a physical impossibility, that the wages of a labourer

should

ſhould ever be withheld, may be wiſe enough to regard it as a phyſical poſſibility, that a workman's tools may *refuſe* to do the work aſſigned to them: and thoſe only who can believe both theſe things can admit, that there is any propriety in the compariſon. Conſult *Beattie on Truth*, Part II. ch. ii. iii. pp. 327, 328. in regard to ſuch compariſons.

Whatever continues *free* in a caſe of compulſion, muſt ſurely be conſidered as confederate in a caſe of compliance. Rouſſeau has an applicable expreſſion in the following ſentiment: "Je ſuis *eſclave* par mes *vices*, "et *libre* par mes *remords*." *Emile*, liv. iv. and Mallebranche aſſerts, that "we are *free* to deny our *conſent*." B. i. ch. 2. which cannot, I think, be doubted; and ſurely Mr. Godwin intimates as much, when he adviſes, "Comply when the neceſſity of the caſe de-"mands it; but *criticiſe* while you comply;" *Pol. Juſt.* b. iii. c. 6. 2d edit.; that is, withhold your conſent, which you may do; and while you ſubmit, exerciſe your judgment, which no coercion can reach. Nay, what ſhall we think of Mr. Godwin's opinion of the *freedom* of conſent, when he ſays, in one place, "We "are ſick, and we die, becauſe in a certain ſenſe we "*conſent* to ſuffer theſe accidents." *Pol. Juſt.* 4to. edit. vol. ii. 519. "Diſcover the ſecret intruſted with you; "I will not, for that is in my power. But I will "throw thee into chains if thou doſt not. Man! "what doſt thou ſay? Me wilt thou fetter? My feet "thou mayſt: but my *purpoſe* not Jupiter himſelf can "overcome." Biſhop Butler obſerves, that the moſt abandoned would wiſh to obtain their ends by innocent means, if they could. Does not this ſhew that they muſt give their *conſent* to the *violation* of ſome moral principle within them, when they do wrong?

So far from our being ſubject to an univerſal neceſſity, both moral and phyſical, it would certainly appear, that there are ſome principles, which no neceſſity whatſoever can reach; except indeed the will and power of God, who could at once deprive us of exiſtence: which is fit to be noticed, becauſe Fataliſts have often confounded free-agency with *independence*. To be able to do ſome things of ourſelves can never imply, that we are able to do every thing. If God has

created any ſelf-motive, ſelf-*determining* agents, ſuch creation can never make them ſelf-*exiſtent*. And yet even Voltaire could think it a wiſe argument in proof of neceſſity, that no man could change his own nature: "Si l'on étoit libre," ſays he, "quel eſt l'homme "qui ne changeât ſon naturel? mais a-t-on jamais vu "ſur la terre un homme ſe donner ſeulement un goût?" The *Abbé Nonnette* well enough replies, Would one ſay a hunch-back was not free, becauſe he could not mend his own ſhape? The Scripture ſays, "Thou canſt not "make one hair white or black;" and even this has been brought in proof of the doctrine of neceſſity, being the doctrine of Scripture: but the Scripture does not ſay we cannot riſe from our bed, or uſe our hands and feet, without being compelled by an abſolute neceſſity.

But it is not my deſign to go farther into this abſtruſe ſubject, than to notice the ſtrange and inconſiſtent opinions, that have been held and avowed. As Lord Shafteſbury determined in regard to the ſpeculations concerning identity, we had better, I think, take our free-agency "upon truſt;" for though argument and ſpeculation and debate may go on to eternity, conduct, in all probability, will be the ſame. [See *King's Origin of Evil*, pp. 200. and 247. note 93] Men will always act as though they were free; for I cannot think any thing can be more juſtly applied to the ſyſtem of univerſal neceſſity, than what Mr. Godwin ſays of the doctrine of ſelf-love; "It is not eaſy to conceive an "hypotheſis more ſingular than this. It is in direct "oppoſition to experience, and what every man ſeems "to know of himſelf: it undertakes to maintain, that "we are under a deluſion of the moſt extraordinary "kind; and which would appear, to a perſon not "trained in a philoſophical ſyſtem, of all others the "moſt improbable." *Pol. Juſt.* b. iv. c. 10.

Page 165. *note* (9.)

None of the modern advocates of this doctrine allow us to draw ſuch a concluſion.] Mr. Hume thinks the doctrine of neceſſity *abſolutely eſſential* to the ſupport of religion and morality. Dr. Prieſtley thinks it a far better foundation for *Ethics* than that of philoſophical liberty.

We

We cannot doubt but the very pious Dr. Hartley had perſuaded himſelf ſo. Godwin thinks, that to act independently of motives, that is, in *his* ſenſe of the term, to act *freely*, is to have our conduct as independent of morality as of reaſon. Mr. Belſham's whole object, in his *Philoſophy of the Mind*, is to reconcile the doctrines of *materialiſm*, *neceſſity*, and the ſelfiſh ſyſtem of morals, with religion and virtue. Mr. B. inſiſts upon it, that whatever is true ſhould be diſcloſed. The Edinburgh Reviewers have ably expoſed this maxim, and have ſhewn, that even if theſe doctrines could be ſuppoſed to be true, they might be of important detriment to ſociety. Even the atheiſtical author of the *Syſtême de la Nature* allows no indemnity to the perverſe, under a ſyſtem of neceſſity, if indeed his argument does not overthrow the whole of the doctrine itſelf: "Les loix ne ſont faites que pour empêcher les "hommes aſſociés de ſe nuire: elles peuvent donc *punir* ceux qui troublent la ſociété. Soit que ces aſſociés ſoient des *agents néceſſités*, ſoit qu'ils agiſſent librement; il leur ſuffit de ſçavoir que ces *agents* peuvent être *modifiés*." Ch. xii. Part. I.

But the beſt account to be given of the ſtate of the queſtion, as applicable either to our preſent conduct or future proſpects, is to be found in the celebrated work of the learned Biſhop Butler. Having ſhewn by many clear and indiſputable arguments, that God at preſent governs the world by the method of rewards and puniſhments, in the *natural* conſequences of virtue and vice, he draws theſe two concluſions: "If it be incredible, that *neceſſary* agents ſhould be ſo rewarded and "puniſhed in the natural conſequences of their actions, "then men are *not* neceſſary, but free; ſince it is matter of fact, that they are thus rewarded and puniſhed. "But if, on the contrary, (which is the ſuppoſition we "have been arguing upon,) it be inſiſted, that men are "neceſſary agents, then there is nothing incredible in "the farther ſuppoſition of neceſſary agents being thus "rewarded and puniſhed; ſince we ourſelves are thus "dealt with."

All ſpeculations upon the ſubject therefore are really unneceſſary; ſince, if we are free, and know ourſelves to be ſo, we muſt believe that we are reſponſible both

to God and to man for the whole of our conduct and our actions, and that rewards and punishments await us accordingly both here and hereafter. But if we can for an instant suppose ourselves necessary beings, then we are assured by Fatalists themselves, that it does not set us free from the obligations of morality with respect to this life; and by the very learned Bishop Butler, that it neither destroys the proof of a moral governor, nor contradicts our being in a state of religion, with respect to God, or with respect to a life to come. See his *Analogy*, Part I. ch. vi.

Page 168. *note* (10).

Système de la Nature, Part I. ch. xii. I have endeavoured to keep to the exact terms the Author himself uses. I have rendered "peines" by our English expression of *pains* and *penalties*, because they are both included in the French term; and the author unquestionably had a view to legal *punishments*, as well as coercion; and the whole is avowedly in vindication of *penal* laws. "Se trouve-t-il des hommes assez mal "constitués pour *résister* ou pour être *insensibles* aux "*motifs* qui *agissent sur tous les autres*, ils ne sont point "propres à vivre en société, ils contrarieroient le but "de l'association, ils en seroient les ennemis, ils met-"troient obstacle à sa tendance, et leurs *volontés rebelles* "et insociables, *n'ayant pu être modifiées* convenable-"ment aux intérêts de leurs concitoyens, ceux-ci se "réunissent contre leurs ennemis; et la loi, qui est "l'expression de la volonté générale, *inflige des peines* à "ces êtres, sur qui les *motifs* qu'on leur avoit présentés "n'*ont point les effets* que l'*on pouvoit en attendre*." The author makes no objection whatever to the *penal* laws of a state; indeed he extends them far beyond what ever entered yet into the mind of the most sanguinary legislator; for, upon his system, madmen, and ideots, and children are as proper subjects of the pains and penalties of the law, as the wicked and perverse: for his definition of a punishable crime is in fact, "toute action "nuisible, de quelque source qu'elle soit partie;" and certainly, at all events, none are so inaccessible to *ordinary motives*, as fools, and madmen, and children. And yet the same writer can argue against the *Theistical Fatalist*

taliſt in the following ſtrong terms. " Eſt-il rien de plus " inconſéquent que les idées de quelques Théiſtes, qui " nient la liberté de l'homme, et qui cependant s'ob- " ſtinent à parler d'un Dieu vengeur et rémunérateur ? " comment un Dieu juſte peut-il *punir* des actions né- " ceſſaires ?" Ch. vii. Part II.

Page 170. *note* (11).

Dr. Prieſtley is not the firſt *Unitarian* who has diſputed the immateriality of the human ſoul; (ſee *Edwards's Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm*, Part IV. p. 38.) but perhaps he is the firſt who has ſo openly avowed his motives for ſo doing. He acknowledges that it proceeded from an apprehenſion, that the doctrine of " a ſeparate ſoul had been the foundation of what ap- " peared to him the very groſſeſt corruptions of Chriſ- " tianity, and of that Antichriſtianiſm which began to " work in the Apoſtles' times, and extended itſelf ſo " dreadfully afterwards;" " I mean," ſays he, " the " Oriental philoſophy of the pre-exiſtence of ſouls, " which drew after it the *pre-exiſtence* and *divinity* of " Chriſt, &c. Among theſe alſo I rank the doctrine of " *atonement* for the ſins of men by the ſufferings and " death of Chriſt." See the *Introduction to his Free Diſcuſſion of the Doctrines of Materialiſm*, in a correſpondence between Drs. Prieſtley and Price. At pp. 240, 241, he ſays further, " In ſhort, it is my firm perſuaſion, that " the *three* doctrines of *materialiſm*, of that which is " commonly called *Socinianiſm*, and of *philoſophical ne-* " *ceſſity*, are equally parts of one ſyſtem, being equally " founded on juſt obſervations of nature, and fair de- " ductions from the Scriptures." I have already had occaſion to notice this publication; ſee note 6. Dr. Price's arguments are unanſwerable in many inſtances; but it is particularly curious, that in his objections he has almoſt forced Dr. Prieſtley into a voluntary illuſtration of the Trinity; that is, in fact, into an acknowledgment of the *reaſonableneſs* of the doctrine, contrary to his own principles: for in anſwer to Dr. Price's objection, " would not *any number* of living bodies be *one* " ſoul, *one* ſentient principle, ſuppoſing their organiza- " tion the ſame ?" Dr. P. replies, " I anſwer, that dif- " ferent ſyſtems of matter, organized exactly alike,

" muſt make different beings, who would *feel* and " *think* exactly alike in the ſame circumſtances. Their " minds therefore would be *exactly ſimilar*, but *numeri-* " *cally different.*" Surely this is at leaſt coming very near to an unity of volition and operation with a diſtinction of perſons. See *Free Diſcuſſion*, p. 78.

Page 171. *note* (12).

Muſt incline us to ſet but ſmall value on ſuch vain ſpeculations.] What are we to think of the advances men have made in *metaphyſics*, when we conſider the *preſent* ſtate of the queſtion concerning matter itſelf: a queſtion of no ſmall importance, when it is made to include the nature of the human ſoul. Dr. Prieſtley attributed motion to matter. His friend Dr. Price poſitively denied it. Diderot, in his *Syſtême de la Nature*, ſays, " le " mouvement *ne peut être* qu'une propriété de la mati- " ere." Rouſſeau ſays, " Mon eſprit refuſe tout acqui- " eſcement à l'idée de la matiere non-organiſée ſe mou- " vant d'elle-même, ou produiſant quelque action." *Emile*. Dr. Darwin, though he afterwards ſeems to deſert his own principles, ſays, in the outſet of his Zoonomia, " The whole of nature may be ſaid to conſiſt of " two eſſences or ſubſtances; ſpirit and matter. The " former has power to commence or produce, the latter " to receive or communicate motion." According to one diſcovery in France, the mind is thought to conſiſt of a fine ſpecies of *cryſtals!* See a paper by *La Métherie* in the *Journal de Phyſique*. At all events, Metaphyſicians are by no means yet agreed as to the poſſibility or impoſſibility of matter's thinking. See *Home's Eſſays*, 3d edit. p. 286.

SERMON

SERMON V.

JEREMIAH vi. 16.

Thus ſaith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and ſee, and aſk for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find reſt for your ſouls. But they ſaid, We will not walk therein.

WHENEVER we perceive a diſpoſition in the world to place a more than uſual confidence in the powers of Reaſon, we may well expect not to be indulged in any attachment or adherence to old opinions. Reaſon, in ſuch a caſe, becomes a faculty altogether *modern.* It is only the wit and wiſdom of the preſent day, that is ever dignified with the title: nor is the title even then beſtowed on the ſober talent of enquiry and inveſtigation, ſo much as on the adventurous propenſity to invention and diſcovery, reformation and change. The former proceſs is too ſlow, and has too much of ſubmiſſion and accommo-

dation

dation in it: the latter is ſure to be popular for the time; for oppoſition, merely as ſuch, is grateful to many minds, and novelty always has its charms.

It is upon this principle that ſo much ill will has been expreſſed of late to every thing taught and inculcated upon a footing of *permanence*, as I had occaſion to notice in my ſecond Diſcourſe; and that we have been ſo rudely called upon to abandon our laws and our ſtatutes, our creeds and our catechiſms, to make way for the ſuperior ſyſtem of *perfectibility* ([1]); which, in the jargon of the times, we have been told, is "the only ſalu-"brious element of mind[2]:" that is, as I conceive, (if it is poſſible to give any meaning to ſo ſtrange an expreſſion,) we muſt ſuffer ourſelves to be perſuaded, that ſince knowledge in general ſeems to be progreſſive, and always capable of further advancement, it is not wiſe to ſuppoſe, that we have hitherto attained to any degree of perfection or certainty, even on points the moſt important. And thus religion and morality muſt be left to take their chance among

[2] *Godwin, Pol. Juſt.* vol. ii. 397. 4to. edit.

other

other things, which the ſuperior wiſdom of the times is to new-model and improve.

But this cannot be the caſe, if either of them is founded on Revelation, or can be ſuppoſed to be ſo; and therefore it is of the utmoſt importance to us to be aſſured, that they *have* ſuch a foundation; that there certainly exiſts ſuch a Revelation; that it has ſome ſuch marks of authenticity, as the Infidel cannot controvert; and that, if we have not ſuch a Revelation in the holy Scriptures, (a Revelation of God's will and deſign in the *firſt creation of man*,) ſo far from having any reaſon to expect greater improvements in the way of morality and religion, we have the utmoſt aſſurance which the nature of things can ſupply, that nothing more certain or ſatisfactory is to be expected, either from God or man.

That it is exceedingly worth our while, independent of all other conſiderations, to examine into the truth of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Revelations, I have already endeavoured to ſhew, by an examination of ſome of thoſe points, which Reaſon *cannot* decide for us, but which thoſe Two Revelations

tions certainly do[b]. Reaſon can never inform us whence we came, or what is to become of us (a); who placed us here, nor for what end, nor what was the origin of the globe we dwell on. Of theſe things the Scriptures inform us. Reaſon can never tell us when the world began, though its eternity is incomprehenſible, and inconſiſtent with our moſt common notions of God's attributes. This the Scriptures decide for us. Our reaſon and our conſcience will both inform us, that we are wicked and corrupt; but that God cannot be conſidered as the immediate author of ſuch wickedneſs and corruption. Theſe difficulties the Scriptures will reconcile for us. Reaſon can never tell us, how theſe things are to end; how we are to be ſet free from the evils that now beſet us; how the moral government of God is finally to be vindicated. All theſe things alſo the Scriptures amply diſcloſe to us.

Such information as the above, then, being to be derived ſolely from the Scriptures, as the ſacred and inſpired records of God's

[b] Vid. *Abbadie de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne*, ſect. iii. ch. 3.

dealings

dealings with mankind from the firſt beginning of things, and of his purpoſe and deſign in the creation both of the earth and of man; it would be the utmoſt folly to ſuffer ourſelves to be deprived of ſuch important information, by any objections that fall ſhort of *poſitive contradiction.*

I cannot help regarding it as a point entirely ſettled, that nothing amounting to *poſitive contradiction* can poſſibly be alleged againſt the peculiar *credentials* of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Revelations, ſuch as *prophecy* and *miracles* (3). Men may diſpute the application of particular prophecies, or the teſtimony concerning particular miracles; but that prophecy or miracles are in themſelves impoſſible, or have not been brought into the ſyſtem of God's providential government of the world, as the Jewiſh and Chriſtian records atteſt, is wholly incapable of proof. Thoſe who have endeavoured to invalidate their authority, by pretending that the former cannot be kept free from the reach of chance; or that no evidence can be ſufficient to certify us of the truth of the latter, have not in any manner proved their points. If *one* prophecy ſhould not have every requiſite

inſiſted

inſiſted on by a late celebrated writer, as ſufficient to prove it to be above the reach of human conjecture, or the contingencies of common events; yet the accumulation and agreement of many ſucceſſive prophecies certainly may: a caſe by no means properly conſidered by the writer alluded to [c]. And as to the poſſibility of a ſufficient evidence of miracles, the very writer who has put himſelf moſt forward to deny it, has by an extraordinary overſight expreſsly admitted it, in contradiction to his own arguments; as has been ſhewn in the cleareſt and fulleſt manner [d]. But *poſitive contradictions* having been ſought for, where indeed it was moſt reaſonable to look for them, in the hiſtorical records of the world, and in the body of the earth itſelf, I ſhall proceed, according to the plan I ſet out with, to take a view of the preſent ſtate of *hiſtory* and *phyſics*, as far as they may be thought to affect the authenticity of the Scriptures. And firſt, in regard to the hiſtorical records of the world.

They who pretend to have the moſt ex-

[c] Rouſſeau.

[d] See *Leland's Anſwer to Hume*, and *Campbell on Miracles*.

alted

alted ideas of God's majeſty, are too apt to regard every thing leſs than infinite as unworthy of his notice, and as inferring ſome limitation of his will or his power. That an eternal Being ſhould be repreſented as doing any thing *in time*, is thought a derogation from his majeſty; and therefore the Moſaic coſmogony is objected to, not only in reſpect to the periodical operations into which it is divided, but for the ſmall antiquity it ſeems to aſſign to our globe or ſyſtem. As to the particular date, be it what it will, it has been well obſerved, in reply to thoſe who are willing to grant the world not to be eternal, that if it ever had a beginning, it muſt at one time or other have been juſt as old as we account it to be now; and ſuch objections would have been juſt as valid *then*, as far as concerns the will and deſign of God. But in regard to the fact itſelf, of the new creation or arrangement of any world or ſyſtem, modern diſcoveries would rather ſeem to juſtify ſuch an hypotheſis. For though we can never ſpeak with too much diffidence upon ſuch ſubjects, yet I cannot forbear to remark, that the loſs of ſome ſtars noticed in ancient catalogues, as well as the

ap-

appearance of new ones, have led ſome very eminent and pious aſtronomers to the conjecture, that, in the courſe of God's providential government of the univerſe, ſome ſyſtems are from time to time diſſolved, and others called into being; and that things may continue ſo till the period fixed for the final conſummation of all things (4).

Such has been lately the conjecture of wiſe and good men; but we muſt not regard it as more than a conjecture; and I have no other view in mentioning it, than to ſhew, that it is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, independently of the light of Revelation, that the very period of the commencement of our ſyſtem, particularly of the globe we dwell on, *may* be *aſſigned*, and *has been* recorded: that it may be regarded as of a *determinate* age, and its date aſcertained, by enquiry into the hiſtory of man, and the origin, courſe, and progreſs of arts and ſciences. For as there can be no doubt, that the chief purpoſe of the creation of this globe muſt have been to make it the ſeat of rational, ſocial, and intelligent beings, the newneſs of ſuch arts and ſciences, as are not eſſential to man as ſuch, muſt be a ſenſible

ſible proof of the low antiquity of this habitable world. But this argument has been ſo often reſorted to, that I need not dwell on it longer, than to remark generally, that we are certainly able to trace many of the moſt important diſcoveries, and moſt neceſſary arts, to a certain point: to ſuch a ſtate of rudeneſs and imperfection, that is, as may at once ſerve to ſhew, that their improvement has been gradual, and that their firſt invention cannot have been very diſtant and remote (5).

But we ought always to remember, that, when once we give up the Moſaic æra of the creation of man, as fabulous, we have comparatively an *eternity* before us (6). The world *may* be ten years, or ten thouſand, or ten thouſand times ten thouſand years older. A ſmall difference will not ſuit the purpoſes of thoſe, who would inſiſt upon the low antiquity of the globe being incompatible with the preſent appearances of things; and to aſſign any very high antiquity at pleaſure will ſerve them no better. A few centuries will make no difference in regard to the former objection, and many will only involve them again in doubts as to the late inven-

tion of arts and ſciences, and the loſs of all monumental records.

But the moſt remarkable circumſtance of all, and that on which I chiefly propoſe to inſiſt at preſent, is the want of all evidence *poſitively contradictory* to the æra aſſigned by the Scriptures. There can be no doubt as to the great antiquity of the book of *Geneſis*. There is no reaſonable doubt to be entertained of its being written and compoſed by Moſes[e]: we have no difficulty in determining the part of the world in which it was written; and we may, by reference to other exiſting annals of the world, and other hiſtories of mankind, be morally certain of many of the circumſtances, under which it muſt have been written, ſuppoſing it to be a merely *human* compoſition. What knowledge Moſes might have had of the world in general, it is neither poſſible nor neceſſary to conjecture; but what he could *not* have known of the world, is almoſt capable of demonſtration[f]. It would be next

[e] See *Gray on the Old Teſtament.*

[f] How ignorant the early Pagan hiſtorians were of the ſituation, affairs, and concerns of other countries, beſides their own, may be ſeen in *Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*, vol. i. p. 95.

to an abſurdity to ſuppoſe that he could have had any knowledge of the great continent of America; of the weſtern parts of Europe; of much of Aſia, and much of Africa. Of Egypt, Phœnicia, and Chaldæa, we may grant that he knew as much as could be known; but it is remarkable, that theſe very countries (till very lately, that their annals came to be better underſtood) were ſuppoſed to have laid claim to an antiquity totally irreconcileable with the Moſaic æra of the creation. Had the author of the book of Geneſis then had no determinate period in view, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that, for the credit of his hiſtory, he would either have poſitively contradicted theſe accounts, or minutely conformed himſelf to them. But inſtead of this, while he even aſcribes to the Egyptians, Babylonians, Aſſyrians, Midianites, and Canaanites, who were enemies and objects of averſion to his countrymen, a higher antiquity than to the Iſraelites[g]; yet, regardleſs of all the extravagances the world has ſince been amuſed

p. 95. See alſo *Wotton's* and *Baker's Reflections on Learning*, for the knowledge the ancients had of geography.

[g] See *Jamieſon on the Uſe of Sacred Hiſtory*, 1ſt Diſquiſition prefixed.

with, he proceeds in a narration, the moſt artleſs and the moſt regular, to deduce the whole race of mankind from one common anceſtor; to whoſe creation he aſſigns a particular æra, as well as to the earth itſelf, their intended habitation and dominion. Certainly, to have written at a particular period; to have written and publiſhed ſuch an account before one half, or even one fourth part of the world was known, or had been traverſed; and to have done this in the very midſt of nations laying claim to an antiquity, far exceeding the æra fixed on, muſt have been as bold an impoſture as could well have been attempted (7).

But it is now, as nearly as can be, upon the loweſt computation, three thouſand years ſince this account was written; in which time the globe has been gradually explored, and every enquiry made, that could be made, into the hiſtory and antiquities of the ſeveral nations into which it is divided. That much is loſt that might aid ſuch enquiries, it would be vain to deny; but that much remains to be diſcovered, it is not reaſonable to ſuppoſe. Of what is loſt, fragments of great importance have been preſerved; and to many,

many, ſuch references are ſubſiſting, as may ſerve to inform us of the general nature of their evidence. Of what remains to be diſcovered perhaps we have little or nothing to expect but from the Eaſt. The literary ſtores of Aſia, to ſay the moſt of them, are now perhaps only exploring—but already we know much—much that is without doubt exceedingly corroborative of the Scripture hiſtory of the earth and of man. I do not mean to take up your time with any examination of the correſpondences particularly to be diſcovered, between the Oriental mythologies and the Moſaic account of the early ages of the world; nor is it my intention to trace ſuch reſemblances through the very curious, but too often obſcure, mazes of etymology. If all that can *reaſonably* be done in *this way* has not yet been done (8), yet certainly ſuch inveſtigations have been purſued far enough to enable us to draw this general concluſion; that even if the Hindu Scriptures could be proved to be older than the Moſaic writings, yet as Moſes might certainly have written, all that he *has* written of the hiſtory of the firſt generations of men, from *tradition*, the many correſpondences and

reſemblances that have been traced in the Hebrew and Hindu Scriptures, as well as in many profane hiſtories, can only tend to ſhew that they were all equally derived from *one* common ſource [h]. Moſes does not tell us himſelf, that his is the oldeſt record of theſe traditions: but as far as it is in agreement with other hiſtories, it requires only common ſenſe to diſtinguiſh it as the moſt authentic; and his inſpiration as a Prophet is totally a diſtinct conſideration.

There are many things connected with the hiſtory of man, of which we muſt now be contented for ever to remain ignorant; and yet they have been conſidered as of no ſmall importance in ſuch inveſtigations as thoſe I am treating of; ſuch, for inſtance, as the origin of languages. It has been thought that, had the world begun, as we ſuppoſe it to have begun, with a firſt pair, all languages now exiſting might be traced to one parent ſtock; and were this clearly practicable, it might certainly be expected to throw

[h] See this diſcuſſed in the 16th vol. of the Britiſh Critic, pp. 148, 149, 150, in anſwer to the ſtrange advertiſement prefixed to the 5th vol. of the *Aſiatic Reſearches*, which is ſurely an interpolation.

much

much light on the origin of nations. But though ſome have thought this poſſible (9), and it muſt unqueſtionably be granted that very ſtriking reſemblances have been traced between the different tongues, idioms, and dialects of nations the moſt remote; yet, as a queſtion which concerns the Scriptures, we muſt remember, that if the Scriptures are true, we read of a confuſion of tongues [i] for wiſe purpoſes; to further the diſperſion of families, and for the diſcomfiture of an impious project: a confuſion which would infer, if not a ſeparation into a multiplicity of diſtinct tongues, yet at leaſt a ſeparation of one language into a great variety of dialects [k]; a variety which time, and the further ſeparation of tribes and nations, the later invention and adoption of different alphabets to expreſs the ſeveral forms of ſpeech [l], and many other circumſtances, muſt have continually increaſed; ſo as to have long rendered ſuch an enquiry too precarious to be depended on. It would be

[i] See *Hartley on Man*, prop. cxxiii. p. 373. edit. 1791, and *Stackhouſe's Hiſtory of the Bible.*

[k] See *Bryant's Mythology.*

[l] See *Jackſon's Chronological Antiquities.*

much more to our purpoſe to endeavour to inform ourſelves how the connection between the different races of people can be traced; and though this alſo muſt, in the nature of things, be now liable to many uncertainties, yet there ſeems to be great reaſon for our reliance on the general reſult of thoſe curious and laborious enquiries, for which we are indebted to that very learned and indefatigable Orientaliſt, whoſe premature loſs, not this place only, nor yet only the nation, but the world at large has had ſuch great occaſion to deplore; namely, that the world *appears*, upon the moſt diligent enquiry that can be made into the ſubject, to have been peopled by *three* great branches proceeding from *one* ſtock. We know that this very curious inveſtigation has been purſued through the four *media*, of their languages and letters; their philoſophy; the actual remains of their ſculpture and architecture; and laſtly, the written memorials of their arts and ſciences [m].

It cannot be expected that I ſhould do

[m] See *Lord Teignmouth's Life of Sir William Jones*, and the ſeveral Anniverſary Diſcourſes and other papers of Sir William, publiſhed in the Aſiatic Reſearches, and in his Works.

more

more at preſent than refer to the very curious diſcourſes and diſquiſitions, whence we derive this information: but I cannot help adding this remark, that if we have not now every document we might have had upon the ſubject, we have ſuch a *gradation* of documents, as may well deter us from all poſſible expectation of receiving any further information, truly hiſtorical, of the more remote ages of the world. The Scripture account is at once the ſhorteſt and moſt regular, indeed the only regular one. What is at all intelligible in other accounts is eaſily reducible to this; what is not intelligible has been proved to be in many reſpects ſo clearly artificial, as to take it entirely out of the line of hiſtory.

But, in order to judge properly of the preſent ſtate of our knowledge in regard to the hiſtory of man, it will be fit to take a ſhort but comprehenſive view of the Hindu chronology, as the laſt that has come before us for examination, and in which there have occurred as great *appearances* of antiquity as in any, perhaps, that has ever been diſcovered ſince the firſt publication of the Geneſis of Moſes. Any exact conformity with the

the Hebrew records, any perfect ſynchroniſms, it would be vain and abſurd to expect; and whatever traces may be found of reſemblance in the hiſtorical records of the Hebrews and Hindus, it is moſt certain that one of the two has deviated ſo much from the plain truth, and run ſo far into the labyrinth of poetical imagery, fable, and allegory, as to afford us but little information truly hiſtorical, upon which we may rely.

The celebrated *Aſtronomical Tables* of the Hindus, however, have been ſuppoſed to ſupply us with *data* of much more certainty (10); and it cannot be denied that they muſt for ever excite our admiration and ſurpriſe. To ſay the leaſt of them, they evince ſuch a knowledge of the celeſtial phænomena, that their accuracy and preciſion in many reſpects are exceedingly extraordinary. It has been ſuppoſed capable of proof by very eminent men, that the calculations *muſt have been derived* from *actual obſervation*; and if ſo, they carry us ſo far back as naturally to occaſion no ſmall ſurpriſe, not only in regard to the advanced ſtate of that curious ſcience in ages ſo remote, but as we conſider the comparative want of inſtruments for the purpoſe of obſervation. It has

has been aſſerted indeed ſince, that wrong dates have undoubtedly been aſſigned to theſe Tables; and, beſides other ſtrong objections, very curious calculations have been made, to ſhew that they need not, at all events, be indiſpenſably referred to actual obſervation; ſince it was poſſible to aſſume ſuch epochs as the Tables aſſign, without the riſk of much perceptible variation[n]. Both theſe circumſtances are undoubtedly of the very firſt importance, if we choſe to inſiſt upon them: but I ſhall rather confine myſelf to the general reſult of the caſe, ſuppoſing every thing to be granted that is required of us, in regard to the great antiquity of theſe Tables.

It is well known that the Hindu chronology is principally divided into *four ages*, all of an extravagant length; the largeſt period extending to the immenſe amount of nearly *two millions* of years. I have already obſerved, that if we once quit the Moſaic æra, we have comparatively an eternity before us. For if that account is not true, we ſhall not, I think, be inclined to truſt to any Pagan mythology,

[n] See *Mr. Bentley on the Surya Siddhanta* in the 6th vol. of the *Aſiatic Reſearches*.

but

but ſhall be contented to acknowledge, that we are without any *certain* account whatever of the *beginning of things*. Now in the Hindu chronology we already have a computation of only one period of nearly two millions of years; and we have nothing, *in the mere nature of things*, to ſet againſt the *poſſibility* of ſuch a duration of our ſyſtem and of mankind, even without any reduction of thoſe years to lunar or diurnal revolutions. The ſecond or third ages are of more than *one million of years*; and the fourth or preſent age is, by their accounts, to laſt upwards of four hundred thouſand years.

Now it is certainly very remarkable, that, though time is much wanted to account in any manner for ſuch a progreſs in the ſcience of aſtronomy, as ſhould enable us to refer the Hindu Tables to the æra they point to; yet thoſe who have examined them with the greateſt attention, and have expreſſed the greateſt confidence in their antiquity, have not been able to diſcover any other *proper* monumental or hiſtorical records, to confirm ſuch a ſtate of things; nor (ſuppoſing them actually the fruit of obſervation) do they yet ſerve to carry us back further, than to ſuch a period

a period as might well be brought into agreement with the Scripture chronology. I do not ſay into exact agreement, nor is the agreement to be traced directly; but yet into a degree of conformity not at all to be expected, if the world is either ſo old as the Hindu records pretend, or even at all older than the Moſaic æra of the creation, according to the largeſt Scriptural computation extant; I mean the computation of the Septuagint. According to this computation, the commencement of the fourth Hindu age, in which we are ſuppoſed to be at preſent, does not carry us beyond the æra of the deluge°: and as every Indian age is ſuppoſed to be terminated by a deluge, all this part of their chronology and hiſtory is ſtrictly *poſtdiluvian*. The two firſt ages are, by thoſe moſt attentive to the ſubject, entirely ſet aſide, as fabulous; therefore we have only the two laſt ages for the hiſtory of man, amounting, according to the Hindu compu-

° The æra of the flood, according to common copies of the LXX. is 3028 before Chriſt; according to Grabe's Septuagint, 3246; according to Perron, 3617. M. Bailly fixes the commencement of the 4th Hindu age at 3102.

tation,

tation, to eight hundred and ſixty-four thouſand years, added to what is expired of the current age. But as the former has been held by one very eminent writer [p] to have conſiſted only of lunar years, or years of months, upon reduction they are brought down to two thouſand four hundred ſolar years; which added to three thouſand one hundred and two, the years ſuppoſed to have elapſed from the commencement of the fourth age to the Chriſtian æra, make in all five thouſand five hundred and two years, leaving a difference of only ſix years between this account and one computation of the Seventy [q].

It is not poſſible in a diſcourſe from the pulpit to go further into ſuch calculations: but ſuch a conformity in accounts apparently ſo contradictory is too ſtriking and remarkable to be entirely paſſed over; more eſpecially as it would *ſeem* to be the winding up

[p] M. Bailly. See note 9.

[q] The computation of the Conſtantinopolitans and Grabe's Septuagint, of the years from the creation to the birth of Chriſt, amounts to 5508 years, 3 months. There are two accounts extant, which come ſtill nearer; that of Cedrenus in Chevreau, which is 5506; and that of Julius Africanus, Theophanes, Eutychius, &c. which is 5500.

of

of all chronological accounts of the world. It is no long time ſince the Chaldæan, Phœnician, Ægyptian, and even Grecian antiquities, were thought to be *quite irreconcileable* to the holy Scriptures; and I ought to add to theſe, the Chineſe annals, which, though ſo much more recently made known to the world, have by ſome been ſuppoſed to be the moſt ancient and moſt accurate accounts of all. The very learned author of the *Origines Sacræ* conjectured, from the particular æra of the publication of the Egyptian and Chaldæan dynaſties, that they were expreſsly deſigned to invalidate the authority of the Septuagint tranſlation of the Old Teſtament[r]: but it has ſince been diſcovered that both accounts are capable of being brought to agree, if not with the Hebrew, which has been ſtrongly inſiſted upon, yet very nearly with the Greek chronology of Scripture, by a judicious ſeparation of all that is clearly fabulous and artificial, and ſuch a reduction of diurnal and lunar to ſolar years, as is not only reaſonable, but expreſsly authoriſed by the teſtimony of very anci-

[r] See alſo *Wotton's Reflections on Learning*, ch. ix. 2d edit.

ent

ent authors; of the propriety and juſtice of which we cannot poſſibly doubt, from many inſtances that might be adduced of different accounts being thus brought to a perfect agreement. This is ſuppoſed to be the caſe, very particularly, with the ſeparate accounts given by Calliſthenes and Epigenes of the Chaldæan obſervations, which according to the latter amounted to the amazing ſum of ſeven hundred and twenty thouſand years [s]; but according to the former to

[s] *Plin. Nat. Hiſt.* vii. c. 56. There can be no doubt of the accidental omiſſion of "*millia*," in this and the following paſſage of Pliny, and that the numbers ſhould be 720,000, and 480,000, that is ſo many years of days. Cicero indeed makes the Chaldæan records amount to only 470,000; "CCCCLXX millia annorum." *de Divinat.* l. i. 19; Diodorus Siculus to CCCCLXXIII thouſand, lib. ii. Pliny's reference is for the purpoſe of ſhewing that the uſe of letters had been, as he ſays, *eternal*. Now as the Chaldæans had a computation of at the leaſt 470,000 years, according to Cicero; it muſt probably have been to *ſuch* computations that Pliny meant to refer. Both Mr. Bryant and the Preſident Goguet cite Pliny, without noticing the inconſiſtency and probable omiſſion; and the latter even makes uſe of the authority of Epigenes againſt the aſſumed antiquity of the Chaldæans. But I think Mr. Jackſon has clearly ſhewn that the reading in Pliny is erroneous. See his Chronological Antiquities, vol. i. 218. For the reckoning of Calliſthenes, ſee Simplicius, Comment. in Ariſtot. de Cœlo, lib. ii.

only

only nineteen hundred and three. Now ſeven hundred and twenty thouſand days make, as nearly as can be, nineteen hundred and ſeventy-one years: and as Epigenes is thought to have been ſixty-eight years poſterior to Calliſthenes, the accounts may be ſaid to agree exactly.

It can ſcarcely by any reaſonable man be thought, that we are not going upon ſure grounds in ſuch calculations of the age of the world, when the ſame method of computation ſerves to bring into agreement, (much more nearly than could be expected) not only the ancient Phœnician, Egyptian, Chaldæan and Hebrew accounts, but the more recently diſcovered annals of China and India! I ſhall not pretend to diſcuſs the very curious but intricate queſtion relative to the differences ſubſiſting between the Hebrew and Greek chronology of the Scriptures; very learned men having beſtowed extraordinary attention on the ſubject[t], without producing on either ſide that univerſal conſent which might have been ex-

[t] See note 9.

pected from their very intereſting and laborious undertakings. Nor do I conceive it to be of any material conſequence; becauſe though the Hindu chronology in *this particular inſtance* has been thought more conformable to the Greek than to the Hebrew computation, yet, ſo far as it exceeds the latter, it depends on circumſtances which only become probable through their ſuppoſed agreement with the reckoning of Joſephus and the Seventy. I think it is enough for us to know, and with that I ſhall conclude, that, ſo far from any hiſtorical evidence *poſitively contradictory* to the Moſaic æras of the creation and deluge, having been diſcovered, even now that the whole globe has been traverſed, and much new light thrown upon the ſubject, what has moſt recently come to our knowledge, ſo far as it can be thought to have *any* foundation in truth, ſeems peculiarly capable of being brought to agree with all the other annals of the world: that all the chronological tables, which have any proper hiſtorical records at all to ſupport them, are ſtrictly *poſtdiluvian*, while ſuch as ſeem

to

to carry us back to a former ſtate of the globe are either manifeſtly and indiſputably fabulous, or, however corrupted in numerous inſtances, contain ſufficient marks of being all derived alike from divine revelation, or patriarchal tradition.

NOTES TO SERMON V.

Page 202. *note* (1).

To abandon our laws and our ſtatutes, &c. to make way for the ſuperior ſyſtem of perfectibility.]

"Law tends, no leſs than creeds, and catechiſms, and "teſts, to fix the human mind in a ſtagnant condition, "and to ſubſtitute a principle of *permanence* in the "room of that *unceaſing perfectibility*, which is the "only ſalubrious element of mind." *Pol. Juſt.* vol. ii. 397.

Nothing can be more difficult than to ſatisfy the demands of Deiſts and Infidels. An immutable and permanent ſyſtem, it ſeems, is in no manner admiſſible; and yet there is no objection to the Chriſtian religion more frequently or more confidently inſiſted on, than its want of univerſality, its late appearance, and its *gradual* propagation. This was the chief argument of Mr. Blount's famous book, which he choſe to call *The Oracles of Reaſon*. He was ably anſwered, as is well known, by Dr. Leland, and by Dr. Clarke, in his *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*. Such a ſcheme of Revelation has alſo often been ſhewn to be analogous to the ordinary diſpenſations of God's providence, particularly by Biſhop Butler, in his celebrated work, and by Dr. Leland and Biſhop Conybeare, in their Anſwers to *Tindal's Chriſtianity as old as the Creation*. See alſo *Law's Theory of Religion*, with the references, p. 5. and *Mr. Bryant on the Authenticity of the Scriptures*.

If we required any *new* caſe of analogy, perhaps a ſtronger could not be found, than in the favourite ſcheme of *perfectibility*, which modern Deiſts make ſuch a ſtir about; for perfection here, as a gift of God, would, no doubt, have been comparatively as acceptable to man,

as ſalvation hereafter; eſpecially ſuch a ſtate of perfection as *has been held* to be *attainable*; namely, the univerſal prevalence of *omnipotent truth*, and the entire ſubjection of *matter* to *mind*: ſo that the ſoul ſhall be free from all error and weakneſs, and the body releaſed from the apprehenſion, and even from the ſtroke of death. [*Godwin*] For the Creator, who firſt placed us in this ſtate of *never-ceaſing* perfectibility, could aſſuredly as eaſily have rendered us invulnerable, perfect, and immortal at once. Rouſſeau, upon the general principle of perfectibility, goes ſo far as to ſuggeſt the poſſibility that many "*Animaux antropoformes*," ſuch as "*les orang-outans, pongos, enjokos, beggos, man-drilles*," &c. may yet turn out to be "*véritables hommes*," when proper opportunities occur for them, "*développer leurs facultés*." *Ouvrages*, tom. i. p. 152. But to be ſerious.

If the ſyſtem of perfectibility ſo much talked of is at all founded in fact, it ſhould certainly tend to ſilence all objections againſt Revelation on the ſcore of its preſent *apparent* want of univerſality, its gradual progreſs, and the ſtate of trial and probation, in which it places us. For not only has Chriſtianity, in its introduction and eſtabliſhment, been thus conformable to all that we can collect of God's providence from a view of nature; but it happens to be beſides, in itſelf, the moſt glorious ſcheme of perfectibility that ever was propoſed to the world.

"There is not, in my opinion," ſays the immortal Addiſon, "a more pleaſing and triumphant conſidera-"tion in religion, than this of the *perpetual progreſs*, "which the ſoul makes towards the perfection of its "nature, without ever arriving at a period in it. To "look upon the ſoul as going on from ſtrength to "ſtrength; to conſider, that ſhe is to ſhine for ever "with new acceſſions of glory, and brighten to all "eternity; that ſhe will be ſtill adding virtue to vir-"tue, and knowledge to knowledge, carries in it ſome-"thing wonderfully agreeable to that ambition, which "is natural to the mind of man. Nay, it muſt be a "proſpect pleaſing to God himſelf, to ſee his creation "for ever beautifying in his eyes, and drawing nearer "to him, by greater degrees of reſemblance. Methinks

"this

"this single consideration of the *progress of a finite* "*spirit to perfection*, will be sufficient to extinguish all "envy in inferior natures, and all contempt in superior. "The cherubim, which now appears as a God to a "human soul, knows very well, that the period will "come about in eternity, when the human soul shall "be as perfect as he himself now is: nay, when she "shall look down upon that degree of perfection, as "much as she now falls short of it," &c. *Spectator*, No. III. See also an excellent Discourse by *Seed*, in the 2d vol. of his *Posthumous Works*, on the *Christian life* being a *progressive state*; and compare Philippians iii. 12, 13, 14.

What a picture of the *perfectibility of man* is this, compared with the strange notions and fanciful conceits of many of our modern Deists! *This* system of *perfectibility* has indeed GOD for its author; and for its *object*, not the worldly attainments of this life only, but the delights of heaven, and the glories of an eternity! Every system of perfectibility however *must* have something *permanent*, either for its object or its foundation. Mr. Godwin himself depends on "the under-"standing growing every day sounder and stronger;" not from its pursuit of a phantom, but "by *perpetual* "*communication* with *truth*." The great question between us still therefore seems to be, "What is *truth?*" or rather, What is *the* truth, and where is it to be found? If in any instance it is clearly and amply made known to us, we cannot, according to Mr. Godwin's own argument, have too constant or too steady a communication with it, for the very purposes of perfectibility. Now it is undeniable, that some truths are so known, as that we may act upon them with the greatest certainty, as the principles of Geometry, &c. Is it the same then with any religious and moral truths? or are these left dependent, and for ever so, on the casual discoveries and deductions of human Reason? Those who make *truth* the only rule of action, independent of the *revealed will* of God, must certainly conclude the latter to be the case; and how uncertain a rule this must be, may be well judged, from the deductions which the learned Wollaston was himself obliged to make from his general proposition, that "Truth is dis-

" coverable by Reaſon." " I would have it minded," ſays he, " that I do not ſay, men may not by virtue of " their freedom break off their meditations and enqui- " ries prematurely, before they have taken a ſufficient " ſurvey of things; that they may not be prepoſſeſſed " with inveterate errors, biaſſed by intereſt, or carried " violently down with the ſtream of a ſect or faſhion, " or dazzled by ſome darling notion or bright name; " that they may not be unprovided of a competent " ſtock of *præcognita* and preparative knowledge; that " (among other things) they may not be ignorant of " the very nature of reaſoning, and what it is that " gives ſinews to an inference, and makes it juſt; that " they may not want philoſophy, hiſtory, or other " learning requiſite to the underſtanding and ſtating " the queſtion truly; that they may not have the con- " fidence to pretend to abilities, which they have not, " and boldly to judge of things, as if they were quali- " fied, when they are not; that many underſtandings " may not be naturally groſs, good heads often indiſ- " poſed, and the ableſt judges ſometimes overſeen " through inadvertency or haſte: I ſay none of theſe " things; the contrary I confeſs is manifeſt." *Religion of Nature*, ſect. iii. 9.

It is true indeed, that he makes a diſtinction between *Reaſon* and *right Reaſon:* a diſtinction that ſhould always be carefully attended to; but which is continually overlooked. But from this account it would certainly appear, firſt, as the learned author himſelf adds, that " not every truth is diſcoverable by Reaſon;" and ſecondly, that but few of thoſe that are diſcoverable are likely to be duly conſidered and appreciated, amidſt ſuch a variety of hindrances, and ſuch a multiplicity of diſqualifications.

The main difference between the Deiſts and Chriſtians, in regard to the great and weighty truths of religion and morality, is, that the former ſtill think they are only diſcoverable in the way of ſpeculation; the latter ſuppoſe, that all that is neceſſary to be known all *concerning truths*, as Biſhop Pearſon ſtyles them, *has been* diſcovered to us, by expreſs declarations of God's will, in the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt. Creeds and catechiſms then, which ſet forth theſe fundamental truths, are

are no more to be condemned, or to be regarded as adverſe to man's perfectibility, than the Elements of Euclid, or any other collection of principles. Thoſe who will inſiſt, that ſuch creeds and catechiſms do not contain the truth, muſt prove their point by reference to Scripture, which is the acknowledged teſt and criterion; but to condemn them generally, is to beg the queſtion, both as to their truth and their pernicious tendency. For if they are really pernicious, they cannot be true; but if they are true, they cannot be pernicious. If founded on truth, it cannot be matter of juſt *regret*, but rather of the contrary, that the mind ſhould be brought to "a ſtagnant" and fixed "condi-"tion." What harm, for inſtance, can be likely to accrue, or rather, what good may not be expected to flow, from the mind being brought into a fixed ſtate, in regard to the very important truths contained in thoſe two beautiful ſummaries of the Church Catechiſm, which contain our duty to God, and our duty to our neighbour? Can ſuch inſtruction, or ſuch forms of belief, and principles of conduct, be ſaid to take any man out of a ſtate of *perfectibility?* Neither can law *in general* be ſaid to tend to fix the human mind in a ſtagnant condition, in any way that is prejudicial, while it may be confined, and always ſhould be ſo, to the mere impoſition of ſuch wholeſome reſtraints, as have both truth and equity for their foundation: for truth and equity *ſhould* be binding, without all doubt, and invariably and permanently ſo.

Teſts will always be miſunderſtood and miſrepreſented: it is certainly not an *uniformity* of opinions, that is either the ſubject or occaſion of them; but clearly, and indiſputably, a *diverſity* of opinions and principles. "The intent," ſays Biſhop Sherlock, "is to keep "*Diſſenters* out of the State, not to force them into the "Church;" and which, he obſerves, is evident, from the circumſtance of "their meetings being tolerated "by the very Act, (1ſt William and Mary,) which ex-"preſsly extends the teſt to them." At all events a great miſtake is made, when they are conſidered as qualifications in themſelves, inſtead of the proofs of previous qualifications, as they ſhould be. They are only enquiries, on the part of the State, into the acknowledged

knowledged principles of the individual. If they were compulsory, they would manifestly soon be useless; a general conformity of opinion would render every sort of test unnecessary.

As to the question concerning the universality of the Christian dispensation, we ought always to distinguish between the *propagation* of Christianity, and its *effects*. "As no man ever denied," says Dr. Clarke, "but that "the benefit of the death of Christ extended back-"wards to those who lived *before* his appearance in the "world; so no man can prove, but that the same bene-"fit may likewise extend itself forwards to those who "never heard of his appearance, though they lived "after it." *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 356. The universality of Christianity, as a dispensation of salvation, is certainly by no means to be measured by the extent of its propagation, according to the judgment and opinion, not only of our own Protestant Divines, but of many of the ancient Fathers; notwithstanding Mr. Gibbon so peremptorily asserts the contrary, upon the sole authority of Tertullian. See *Kett's Vth Bampton Lecture:* the passage there referred to from *Justin Martyr, Apol ad Ant. P.* p. 65. edit. Sylburg. 1593; in which he not only expresses a hope, that "Socrates, and those who resembled him in vir-"tue, would escape the divine displeasure in another "life; but, with a peculiar allusion to the general bene-"fits imparted by the divine *Logos*, dignifies them "with the appellation of *Christians*;" is certainly very striking; and, though it escaped the notice of Mr. Gibbon, has been cited by another Infidel for a very different purpose; namely, to prove that the primitive Christians were so *tolerant*, as to account a virtuous man a Christian, *though otherwise an Atheist*. This is Helvetius's representation of Justin Martyr's opinion upon the subject, in which certainly the testimony of that holy Father is as much misrepresented, as in the other case it was overlooked or slighted. Justin's expression is, κἂν ἄθεοι ἐνομίσθησαν, though they may have been *accounted* Atheists; as for instance, Σωκράτης καὶ Ἡράκλειτος, καὶ οἱ ὅμοιοι αὐτοῖς· that is, οἱ μετὰ λόγε βιώσαντες, who under a system of natural religion, or Paganism, lived agreeably to the divine will. It has often certainly been

been ſtrongly inſiſted upon by ſome of our beſt Divines, that the doctrine of the Scripture is, that the virtue of Chriſt's oblation was effectual *from the creation* to the pardon of the truly penitent and ſincere. See *Barrow's Sermons*, on *Univerſal Redemption*, Serm. XL. See alſo *Leland's Anſwer to Tindal*, Part II. ch. xvi. *Seed's Poſthumous Works*, vol. i. Serm. V. *Edwards's Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm*, Diſc. II. 109.

Mr. Gibbon however perſiſts in aſſerting, not only that it was the opinion of the primitive Church, that the wiſeſt and moſt virtuous of the Pagans would be condemned for their ignorance or diſbelief of the divine truth, but that it is ſtill the public doctrine of all the Chriſtian Churches, and particularly that the miniſters and members of the eſtabliſhed Church of theſe realms *muſt* believe ſo, as the undeniable concluſion to be drawn from the viiith and xviiith of the Articles. From Dr. Chelſum's remarks, it would ſeem that this aſſertion concerning the two Articles did not appear in the firſt edition of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. If ſo, its inſertion in a note to the 8vo edition may be regarded as Mr. Gibbon's laſt appeal in proof of his unwarrantable charge againſt us. Now, aſſuredly, this undeniable concluſion, which Mr. G. pretends to draw from the viiith and xviiith Articles, will not be generally conceded to him. The firſt of the two Articles merely ſtates the ſimple propoſition, that the three Creeds ought thoroughly to be received and believed; and for the beſt of all poſſible reaſons, becauſe they may be proved by moſt certain warrants of holy Scripture. If Mr. Gibbon would inſiſt upon interpreting theſe creeds differently from other people, he alone ſhould be anſwerable for the concluſions he draws. But the damnatory clauſes of the Athanaſian Creed are too generally held to relate to the *abſolute* and *indiſpenſable* neceſſity of *knowing* and *embracing* the Goſpel: whereas they only relate to the keeping the terms of our faith pure and undefiled, when once known and profeſſed: which I ſhall have occaſion to explain elſewhere.

As to the xviiith Article, we might almoſt inſiſt upon its aſſerting the very contrary to what Mr. Gibbon would infer: for it is expreſsly deſigned to eſtabliſh the univerſality of the Chriſtian redemption, ſo much

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ſo as to pronounce thoſe anathematized who preſume to ſay that *any* are, or will be, ſaved, *but through Jeſus Chriſt*. The Gentiles will not be ſaved *by* their obedience to the law written in their hearts, *excluſive* of the atonement and mediation of Jeſus Chriſt; though ſuch obedience will be the condition of Chriſt's merits being applied to them, under any circumſtances of invincible ignorance of the Goſpel; as the not having had it duly preached to them, or ever propoſed to them, as an object of faith. The Article was not meant to be oppoſed to the univerſality of Chriſt's redemption, but to the dangerous doctrine of *indifference:* for though the Pagan of old times may by his virtues retroſpectively become the object of Chriſt's atonement and mediation; yet it does not follow that ſuch obedience to the law natural will ſave thoſe who wilfully reject and deſpiſe the terms of the Goſpel, and, in ſpite of our Lord's own aſſurance, that "no man "cometh to the Father but by him," perſiſt in truſting to their own righteouſneſs to ſave them, and to ſuch forms of worſhip as their fancy leads them to adopt. The Article does not ſtate, that the virtuous Pagan who lived before the times of the Goſpel will not be ſaved through the efficacy of the blood of Chriſt: but it anathematizes thoſe, who, in contradiction to the word of God, and *ſince the promulgation of Chriſtianity*, maintain, that any will be ſaved except through the merits and mediation of Jeſus Chriſt. And moſt wholeſome doctrine this is, for "in vain did Chriſt reveal the Goſpel, "and in vain did he command it to be preached "through the whole world," if men are to be ſaved excluſively of Chriſt's interpoſition. The Article is deſigned in ſhort, not to ſhut, but to open the doors of the Church; for ſince not even the Pagan, to whom the Goſpel was never preached, can be ſaved except through Chriſt, much leſs is it to be expected that thoſe to whom the "pure word of God" has been preached, and the terms of the Chriſtian covenant made known, will be freely juſtified upon any other terms. To *prefer*, and to *truſt to*, any *other* mode of ſalvation, is *now* no leſs than to "deſpiſe the riches of God's mercy," and to neglect the covenant of his grace, "which at the "firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was con-

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" firmed to us by them that heard HIM; God bearing " them witneſs, both with ſigns and wonders, and " with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, " according to his own will." Hebrews ii. 3, 4.

Page 204. *note* (2).

Reaſon can never inform us whence we came, or what is to become of us.] See Lord Bolingbroke's Works, vol. v. and the xvth chapter of *Mr. Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* already referred to in the 22d Note to Sermon I. The former acknowledges the inſufficiency of Reaſon to inform us of our *entrance* into the world; not indeed without expreſſing his incredulity in regard to the accounts we have: " *Reaſon* " will tell us no better *how men came into the world,* " than hiſtory or tradition does." And as to our *departure* from this world, Mr. Gibbon aſſures us, that however Reaſon may ſerve to point out the *probability* of a *future ſtate,* " only Revelation can aſcertain its ex- " iſtence."

Page 205. *note* (3).

Nothing amounting to poſitive contradiction can poſſibly be alleged againſt the peculiar credentials of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Revelations, ſuch as prophecies and miracles.] Though every expedient ſhould be tried to get rid of the evidence of prophecy and miracle, yet thus much is certain, that " nothing is *abſolutely incredible,* " but what is *impoſſible.*" See *Church's Anſwer to Middleton,* and *Leng's Boyle's Lectures,* Sermons xiii. xiv.

Now that neither prophecy nor miracle is impoſſible, is at leaſt tacitly acknowledged by thoſe who have been moſt eminent for their incredulity; Mr. Hume and Rouſſeau particularly: all their objections turning, not upon the impoſſibility of either, but upon the incompetency of their evidence; and both of them having, in the midſt of their objections, ſuppoſed caſes, in which not only prophecy and miracle would be both poſſible and reaſonable; but their evidence, and the teſtimony concerning them, complete. Rouſſeau indeed ſuppoſes his caſe to be ſo much in the extreme, as not to be within the reach of poſſibility: but Mr. Hume's

Hume's caſe is ſuch a conceſſion as affects his whole argument againſt miracles. See *Dr. Campbell's* excellent *Diſſertation on Miracles*, Part I. §. 3. in which this is fully proved. See however alſo *Dr. Leland's* xviiith and xixth Letters in his *View of Deiſtical Writers*, 5th edit. and *Dr. Adams's Anſwer to Hume*. Rouſſeau's three requiſites, which he inſiſts upon as indiſpenſable in the caſe of prophecy, have been already ſhewn, in the Notes on Sermon II. not to be applicable to a *chain* and *ſeries* of prophecies; and therefore cannot affect thoſe belonging to the Jewiſh and Chriſtian diſpenſations: and beſides that they are inapplicable to a *chain* of prophecies, while the two former requiſites are unqueſtionably not by any means eſſentially neceſſary to the proof even of a ſingle prophecy; with regard to the third, an accumulation and coincidence of many prophecies, through a long ſucceſſion of ages, ſuch as the prophecies of Scripture, is in itſelf demonſtration enough, that the fulfilment of them could not be the reſult of accidental circumſtances. At all events, in regard to *miracles*, Rouſſeau would not be thought to deny *their poſſibility*, if we may truſt *his own* words: for, in his 3d *Letter from the Mountains*, he ſays, "Do "not conclude, becauſe I do not look upon miracles "as eſſential to Chriſtianity, that I therefore *reject* mi-"racles. No, Sir; I neither have rejected them, nor "do I reject them. There is a wide difference be-"tween denying a thing, and the not affirming it; "between poſitively rejecting, and negatively not ad-"mitting it." Indeed the poſſibility both of miracles and prophecy is indiſputable; without the former the world could not have exiſted, and the latter is immediately connected with the moſt conſpicuous of God's attributes, viz. his omnipotence and omniſcience.

To allege, as Mr. Hume does, that we have the evidence of an uniform experience againſt the truth of miracles, is a *petitio principii*. It is firſt incumbent on him to *prove*, that there never were miracles; then only could he aſſert a conſtant experience in proof againſt them. But ſuppoſe *paſt* experience was thus uniform in favour of his argument, it could amount to no proof againſt miracles in time to come. Becauſe God has operated no miracles in five or ſix thouſand years, may

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he not in the hundred millions of years, which the world may endure? May he not interfere to put nature one inch out of her courſe in all that time? "Ex- "perience," as Dr. Leland admirably obſerves, "*may* "*aſſure us*, that facts or events are *poſſible*, but *not* that "the *contrary is impoſſible*." *View of Deiſtical Writers*, vol. i. 317. See alſo a ſmall work by M. A. J. Rouſtan, entitled, *Lettres ſur l'Etat préſent du Chriſtianiſme:* Londres, 1768; where this point is ably argued.

As to the *probability* of miraculous interpoſitions on the part of God, it is well remarked, by the learned Profeſſor Jenkin, in his *Reaſonableneſs and Certainty of the Chriſtian Religion*, vol. i. p. 26, that "it is an ex- "travagant thing to conceive, that God ſhould exclude "himſelf from the works of his own creation; or that "he ſhould eſtabliſh them upon ſuch inviolable laws, "as not to alter them upon ſome occaſions, when he "foreſaw it would be requiſite to do it. For unleſs the "courſe of nature had been thus *alterable*, it would "have been defective in regard to one great end for "which it was deſigned; viz. it would have failed of "being ſerviceable to the deſigns of Providence upon "ſuch occaſions." Apply this to the caſes of Ahab, Nebuchadnezzar, and Sennacherib, alluded to in Note 10. Sermon I. What horrible conſequences might have flowed, in each of thoſe inſtances, from the daring defiance of God, had he not interpoſed by *miracles!* Conſult alſo *Profeſſor Vince's two Sermons on Chriſtianity*, 1798; where he argues againſt Hume, that "the *moral* "good and tendency of miracles puts them upon a "footing with the common *phyſical* effects produci- "ble in the courſe of nature. The latter, being ap- "pointed by God to miniſter to the phyſical wants of "man, do not differ in principle from miracles wrought "by the ſame Providence for *moral* ends and pur- "poſes."

Had God never, in any age of the world, interpoſed miraculouſly, we may judge what notions would have been entertained of his Providence, from the conduct of thoſe eminent Infidels of this age of Reaſon, MM. Volney and Diderot: the latter having denied the very being of God, from his own *power of writing againſt it*; and the former conſtantly arguing againſt the Scriptures, from

from the frequent inſtances of proſperity and ſucceſs attending unbelievers. But the OLD Teſtament tells us it was *not ſo* at *firſt:* and the NEW, that henceforth ſuch differences and diſtinctions are reſerved for a future life. See alſo *Leland's Anſwer to Tindal*, as to the probability of miraculous interpoſitions, Part I. ch. iii. where he very well argues, that though God be immutable and perfect, yet, unleſs man were ſo too, there is no reaſon why God may not add to his former laws, and vary the methods of his Providence.

Mr. Hume is pleaſed to aſk, "What reply can be "made to thoſe who affirm, that miracles have always "been confined to the early and fabulous ages?" "The reply is eaſy," ſays Biſhop Horne; "that mi- "racles *were* performed by Chriſt and his apoſtles, in "the age of all others eſteemed the moſt polite and "learned; and that the adverſaries of thoſe days never "thought of denying the facts." *Letters on Infidelity*, Letter IX. But ſuppoſing miracles *had* been confined to the early, and what Mr. Hume chooſes to call indiſcriminately the *fabulous ages*. There might have been good reaſon for this: and the very credulity of thoſe ages, ſo far from bringing true miracles into diſcredit, might be eſpecially alleged as one reaſon for ſuch an interpoſition on the part of God. For if they were credulous only through ignorance of the operation of natural cauſes, (and ſuch ignorance Rouſſeau inſiſts upon as the ground of all miraculous pretenſions,) that very ignorance might give the more knowing among them ſuch a power of deceiving them, that when the whole world were given to idolatry, it muſt have been peculiarly neceſſary not only for God to interpoſe generally, but that the *true* prophets ſhould have a command of ſuch credentials, expreſsly to counteract the deluſions of the falſe prophets and magicians. Origen argues very well, *contr. Celſ.* lib. iii. that when all the neighbouring nations were pretending to have intercourſe with their Gods, and through their auguries and oracles to have knowledge of future events, and to perform miracles and wonders, it would have been ſtrange and unaccountable, if the only worſhippers of the true God, who were taught to hold thoſe falſe Gods in contempt, had had no predictions

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and miracles to oppoſe to ſuch deluſions; if it were only to vindicate the omnipotence and providence of the Creator of the univerſe, to give them a proper confidence in the grounds of their own faith, and to convert idolaters from the error of their ways. The paſſage is admirable, and the argument particularly ſtriking. Camb. edit. p. 113. And certainly the deſign and intent of *prophecy*, at leaſt in thoſe early ages, may be ſaid to be expreſsly ſo explained, Iſaiah xlviii. 5. "Before it came to paſs I ſhewed it thee; *leſt thou* "*ſhouldeſt ſay, Mine idol* hath done them, and *my* "*graven image*, and my *molten image* hath commanded "them." And the Urim and Thummim of the Jews, the *oracle* of the true God, has been thought to have been expreſsly oppoſed to the oracular images of the Pagans. See *Jackſon's Chronological Antiquities*, vol. iii. 239. In Iſaiah xliv. 6, 7. prophecy is particularly inſiſted on, as the diſtinguiſhing credential of the true God.

The objections to the Scripture prophecies, on account of their obſcurity, have been ſufficiently anſwered by many writers; ſee however very particularly *Biſhop Hurd's Iſt and IIId Sermons on Prophecy*; *Leſlie's Truth of Chriſtianity demonſtrated*, p. 149. fol. edit. and *Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs and Certainty of Chriſtianity*, b. ii. ch. 7. where the ſubject is very ably handled, and many ſubſtantial reaſons aſſigned for the obſcurity of the genuine prophecies.

As to the ſecondary and typical application of many of the prophecies, ſee alſo the ſame authors, and Leland's VIIth Letter in his *View of Deiſtical Writers*. There are ſome very ingenious Letters upon the ſubject likewiſe in the *Orthodox Churchman's Magazine* for March and April, 1804. As to the point itſelf of ſecondary ſenſes, it is certain, that any ſupernatural prediction may as eaſily embrace many objects as one; and at all events there are prophecies enough applicable to Chriſt in a primary ſenſe, to ſatisfy any reaſonable enquirer, as has been abundantly ſhewn by Biſhop Chandler, in his *Defence of Chriſtianity, from the Prophecies of the Old Teſtament*, 1725. and many other authors. See alſo *Juſtin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho*.

That Chriſtianity appeals to the teſtimony of miracles,

cles, has been already ſhewn, in anſwer to Rouſſeau, Note 6. Sermon I. That ſhe alſo appeals to the teſtimony of prophecy cannot with any reaſon be doubted. But there is one appeal of this kind recorded by the Evangeliſts, which is certainly very remarkable; I mean the converſation which our Saviour is repreſented to have held with the two diſciples, on their way to Emmaus, Luke xxiv. when, "beginning at Moſes, "and all the prophets, he expounded unto them, in all "the Scriptures, the things concerning himſelf." Had not the Evangeliſt been fully aſſured in his own mind that ſuch things were eaſily to be diſcovered, by any who would diligently ſearch the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, could any circumſtance in the whole hiſtory of our Saviour's miniſtry have been more worth preſerving than this converſation, in proof of his Meſſiahſhip? Would none of our Lord's diſciples have ſecured this evidence for us? Would St. Luke, in particular, who ſeems to have written expreſsly to ſupply what might be wanting in the other Goſpels, have omitted it? Would not the Holy Spirit of God have dictated this important teſtimony to the Evangeliſts, had it not been a matter of certainty, that the predictions of Moſes and the Prophets were perſpicuous enough to thoſe who would refer to them for their own conviction? The omiſſion of this diſcourſe appears to me a poſitive proof of the Evangeliſt's ſettled perſuaſion, that the fact was eaſily to be eſtabliſhed: for it would otherwiſe have expoſed the cauſe he was engaged in, to mention it without neceſſity. Common ſenſe would have dictated it to him to ſuppreſs a reference, which could not be ſatisfactory; and above all, not to have repreſented our Saviour as reproving his diſciples for a ſlowneſs of heart, in not diſcovering what was not to be found in the writings referred to; or, as others would infer, which could not be brought to apply, but by art and ſubtlety, quibble and conceit. Several, I know, have endeavoured to find a reaſon for the ſuppreſſion of this diſcourſe, as for inſtance, Dr. Burnet, in his Treatiſe *De Fide et Officiis Chriſtianorum*, p. 120. c. 7. and ſeveral have attempted to ſupply the chaſm; but it is beſt ſupplied by a general reference to the Old Teſtament, beginning the chain of prophecy with Moſes, and purſuing it upwards

wards through the ſucceeding prophets; not confining ourſelves merely to the events of Chriſt's death, and reſurrection, and exaltation, as ſome have done rather injudiciouſly, (ſee *Mede's Diſcourſe on Luke* xxiv. 45. and Doddridge's Notes on the place, in his *Family Expoſitor*, ſect. 197.) but the general circumſtances of his miniſtry.

A modern divine, Mr. Clowes, of Mancheſter, a great advocate for the reveries of Baron Swedenborg, concludes from ver. 45. where Chriſt is ſaid to "have "opened the underſtandings" of his diſciples, that their acquaintance with the mere letter of Scripture was not ſufficient. But certainly the expreſſion, ver. 25. "O ſlow of heart," implies a capacity in the diſciples to have underſtood and to have applied the prophecies, without any *miraculous illumination*. See the introduction to Clowes' Sermons, pub. 1803.

The gift of prophecy being clearly aſſigned to Moſes by our Lord himſelf, not only in the paſſage referred to, but in many other parts of the New Teſtament; and being demonſtrable beſides from the ſtate and condition of the people of Iſrael, from their firſt original to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, which, as Profeſſor Jenkin has obſerved, was the perpetual fulfilling of prophecies contained in the books of Moſes; we cannot have any difficulty to believe, that he had alſo the power of working miracles; and thus the fulfilment, not only of the Moſaic, but of the Scripture prophecies in general, may reaſonably be held to authenticate all that we read in the ſacred hiſtory of the *miraculous* powers with which the Prophets of God, and the Apoſtles of Jeſus Chriſt, were ſeverally inveſted. One credential is a reaſonable proof of the exiſtence of the other; a prophecy accompliſhed is a miracle. See this teſt inſiſted on in *Sykes's Connection of Natural and Revealed Religion*, chap. ix.

Page 208. *note* (4).

"The total diſappearance of a ſtar may probably be the "deſtruction of its ſyſtem, and the appearance of a new "ſtar, the creation of a new ſyſtem of planets." *Vince's Aſtronomy*, vol. i. ch. 27. And at the concluſion of the 2d vol. the ſame learned author obſerves, "the diſappearance

" of ſome ſtars may be the deſtruction of that ſyſtem at " the time appointed by the Deity for the probation of " its inhabitants; and the appearance of new ſtars may " be the formation of new ſyſtems, for new races of " beings then called into exiſtence to adore the works " of their Creator. Thus we may conceive the Deity " to have been employed from all eternity, and thus " continue to be employed for endleſs ages; forming " new ſyſtems of beings to adore him, and tranſplant- " ing thoſe beings already formed into happier re- " gions, where they have better opportunities of medi- " tating on his works; and ſtill riſing in their enjoy- " ments, go on to contemplate ſyſtem after ſyſtem, " through the boundleſs univerſe." Dr. Herſchel has given us a catalogue of ſtars formerly ſeen, now loſt; *Phil. Tranſ.* 1783.

To prove that the world cannot have been eternal, Dr. Sykes obſerves, in his *Connection of Natural and Revealed Religion*, that " it implies no contradiction to " *ſuppoſe* the earth, the ſun, or any planet, to be away, " and the ſpace, which now they fill, to be left empty: " and what is ſuppoſable, without any contradiction, " to be true of any one of the worlds of the univerſe, " is likewiſe ſuppoſable of any, or of all, the reſt. " Now if you can ſuppoſe one world away, that world " cannot exiſt by any neceſſity in its nature: and if " one world may be removed without contradiction, " ſo may all the reſt; and in courſe none of them can " be neceſſary in exiſtence or duration."

Page 209. *note* (5.)

Though the invention, improvement, progreſs, and perfection of ſome arts and ſciences may ſeem to be involved in much obſcurity; yet it is undeniable, that many of the *moſt important* may be traced back, as I have obſerved in the Diſcourſe, " to ſuch a ſtate of " rudeneſs and imperfection, as muſt ſerve to ſhew, " that their firſt invention cannot have been *very* diſ- " tant and remote." Among thoſe of moſt material importance to man, we may certainly reckon medicine, ſurgery, and pharmacy in all its branches; writing, printing, and, as particularly connected with both, the art of making paper. Even the firſt diſcovery of fire, and

and its uſes, is noticed in the records of moſt nations. The application, beſides, of the magnetic virtue of the loadſtone to the purpoſes of navigation, a diſcovery ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary to the commerce and communication of the different nations of the globe, may certainly be traced to no very remote æra. Conſult, on the newneſs of arts and ſciences, *Sir Iſaac Newton's Chronology*; *Dr. Wotton's and Mr. Baker's Reflections on Learning*; *Univerſal Hiſtory*, b. i.; the third part of *Biſhop Law's Theory of Religion*; *Nicholls's Conferences*, Part I. *Campbell on Miracles*; and very particularly the *Preſident Goguet's* very learned work on the ſubject, with the *Diſſertations* annexed to the third volume.

To talk of the loſs and revival of ſuch arts as the foregoing is abſurd; for, if ſome trifling arts, or ſome not of indiſpenſable utility, may have vaniſhed or degenerated in the lapſe of ages, yet, as Dr. Wotton, in the preface to his very learned work, reaſonably aſks, who hath ſuffered, ſince the days of Tubal-Cain, the uſe of metals to be loſt in the world? the uſe of letters to be intermitted, ſince the days of Cadmus? When have the arts of planting, weaving, building, been laid aſide? or the uſe of the loadſtone forgotten? See alſo the *Preſident Goguet's Preface*, p. vii.

Beſides the argument drawn from the novelty of arts and ſciences, there are circumſtances connected therewith, which have not, as far as I know, been ever duly conſidered and enquired into; namely, the conſumption of exhauſtible commodities, ſuch as the products of mines of all ſorts. It is propoſed as a queſtion in the *Lettres de quelques Juifs à M. Voltaire*, whether there was not formerly more gold and ſilver in the world, than now. See p. 397. and in a note, p. 407. the account of Agatharcides, preſerved by Photius, of the immenſe quantity of gold among the Alileans and Caſſandrins, in the ſouthern parts of Africa, is particularly noticed. Dean Prideaux has given us the ſame extract, in his attempt to ſettle the true country of *Ophir*. *Connection*, Part I. b. i. where may be alſo ſeen the immenſe amount of the gold ſupplied by David for the building of the temple. But in the fifth book the learned author particularly treats of the *ſuperabundance* of gold and ſilver in thoſe early times, where he has

occaſion to ſpeak of the extravagant ſum offered by Haman, for the deſtruction of the Jews, Eſther iii. 9. See particularly pp. 311, 312. and notes f, g, h, &c. See alſo the account of the Spaniſh mines worked by the Phœnicians, in *Gibbon's Roman Hiſtory*, vol. i. ch. vi. 258.

It is generally admitted, by thoſe who have treated of the origin of arts and ſciences, either profeſſedly or hiſtorically, that the precious metals were originally found on the ſurface of the earth, and were procurable in great abundance, without the labour of digging for them: they were alſo employed for purpoſes, for which they were not fitted by nature; as for arms, and tools to cultivate the earth. See *Diod. Sic.* lib. i. The Egyptians put gold and ſilver to all ſorts of uſes. *Herodot.* lib. iii. And this was found to be much more recently the caſe with the Mexicans and Peruvians, when the Spaniards firſt explored America. M. Bailly, in his eccentric *Letters on the Atlantis of Plato*, ſeems to make it an argument of the great antiquity of his favourite hyperboreans, that arms and tools of braſs and gold have been found in abundance near the river Jeniſca. Now, beſides that the want of iron inſtruments is a direct proof of the little progreſs they muſt have made in metallurgy; if he had turned to the 5th book of *Lucretius*, he would have found, that ſuch has been the progreſs of things from the firſt. Gold and ſilver were firſt uſed, then braſs, and laſtly iron. So far, therefore, from ſuch relics being any proof of the perfection of the arts in ſuch countries, they evince the very contrary; and whatever people they belonged to, ſo far from being marks of refinement, or of any great degree of perfection, they plainly ſhew them to have been in a comparative ſtate of rudeneſs, and in the very infancy of civilization. And thus perhaps what we read of the profuſe ſplendor, and riches, and copious ornaments of ancient buildings, inſtead of ſupplying arguments for the great antiquity of the world, may rather ſerve to demonſtrate in a direct manner the novelty of our continents, and even lay a foundation perhaps for curious calculations in regard to the duration of our globe, in its preſent habitable ſtate: for that many minerals both of uſe and ornament are in a ſtate of actual exhauſtion,

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we cannot, I think, poſſibly doubt. Coals have not been in general uſe many centuries, and yet ſome mines are already entirely exhauſted, and forges and manufactories at an end, that had been erected for the particular local advantages of the fuel they ſupplied. I am obliged to cite from memory, but I am pretty well aſſured, that there is much that is very curious upon this ſubject to be found in *Williams's Mineralogy*, or *Natural Hiſtory of the Mineral Kingdom*, printed in Scotland.

The conceit of the *growth of minerals*, which ſeems to have been chiefly founded on a miſtaken notion of ſtalactical depoſitions, is now too generally exploded, to afford any expectation, in the preſent ſtate of things, of an adequate ſupply and replacing of ſuch conſumed and conſumable commodities; nor are we ſufficiently acquainted with the operations of nature, in the production of metals, to aſcertain the probability, or even poſſibility, of any copious renewal of thoſe articles: and yet it is calculated, that in our town of Birmingham alone, the quantity of gold and ſilver annually employed in gilding and plating, and *thereby diſqualified from ever afterwards appearing in the ſhape of thoſe metals*, amounts to more than 50,000l ſterling; equal to the 120th part of the whole annual importation of thoſe metals into Europe, at the rate of ſix millions a year. See *Smith's Wealth of Nations*, b. i. ch. 11. May it not admit of a queſtion, whether the operations of nature, abſolutely *neceſſary* for the production of metallic veins, the diſlocation and fracture of ſtrata to afford room for them, and the formation of ſuch extenſive beds of coals, and other bituminous matters as we meet with, may not be ſo violent as to require that the globe ſhould be uninhabitable at the time; and therefore, that the origin or renewal of our race *muſt needs be referable* to ſome *ſuch* cataſtrophe as *an univerſal deluge*, or a general arrangement of the materials of the globe; and that not *very remote?* But this will be conſidered more at large in the Notes to the next Diſcourſe.

Page 209. *note* (6).

When once we give up the Moſaic æra of the creation of man, as fabulous, we have comparatively an eternity before us.] If the aſſumed antiquity of ſome nations

exceeded the Moſaic account by only a few years, or a few ages, we might be more diſpoſed to examine their pretenſions: but when we come to 470,000 years, (the Chaldean account, according to Cicero,) to the Egyptian, Phœnician, Chineſe, and above all the Hindu annals, of millions of years, it is impoſſible to conceive the art of writing to have been ſo late a diſcovery, as to have ſecured to us no records, that can be at all relied on. Dr. Toulmin, a modern writer on the antiquity of the world, who, from the dates of his publications, appears to have been, in the year 1780, only aſſured of the immenſe antiquity of the globe, and not to have conjectured it to be *eternal* till the year 1785, (what progreſs his ideas afterwards made we know not,) ſets aſide *all* accounts of the origin of the earth and of man as barbarous tales, fabricated in the *rude infancy* of ſociety. Now none of theſe accounts themſelves can be proved to be older than Moſes, as he muſt know, to whatever extent their hiſtories are carried back; and yet their times are called the *rude infancy of ſociety*, by a man who inſiſts upon the eternity of the world. He tells us, "human teſtimony or tradition, "even granting them their utmoſt latitude, are but of "the moſt limited extent; that it is only in the *ad-*"*vanced ſtate* of *refinement*, that the art of writing "could at any time or in any country poſſibly have "taken its origin;" and he adds, as if it followed as an immediate concluſion from the above premiſes, "Reaſon will be found to announce, without the ſha-"dow of heſitation, that the *human* ſpecies, &c. fluc-"tuating in their increaſe and decreaſe, their barba-"riſm and refinement, actually have flouriſhed, amidſt "the unceaſing revolutions of nature, through an eter-"nity of exiſtence!"

This ſame art of writing is a great ſtumbling-block to Deiſts and Atheiſts. If the firſt written hiſtories give us an account of the origin of things, they were *barbarous* ages, and could tell us nothing but fables; but when they want to make the world very old, then writing is the invention of a refined age, and that age nobody knows how remote. Voltaire forgets himſelf ſo far as to let us into this ſecret. Moſes, ſays he, could not have written the Pentateuch, becauſe at that time

time they knew no method of writing but the hieroglyphical. They had nothing to write upon but wood, and brick, and ſtone, and therefore could never write ſuch a great book (*gros livre*) as the Pentateuch: which is certainly a very ſmall book, as the whole Bible is, comparatively. But when, on another occaſion, the ſame *careleſs* writer (to ſay no worſe of him) has to ſpeak of Sanchoniathon, that favourite rival of the Jewiſh legiſlator, then, he was at leaſt contemporary with Moſes, and uſed *alphabetical characters*, and derived his hiſtory from the *writings* of Thaut, who flouriſhed 800 years before him. See *Lettres de quelques Juifs*, &c.

Page 212. *note* (7).

Muſt have been as bold an impoſture as could well have been attempted.] "Neque vero cuiquam prudenti credibile fiet Moſem, qui non Ægyptios tantum hoſtes habebat, ſed et plurimas gentes alias, Idumæos, Arabas, Phœnicas; vel de mundi ortu et rebus antiquiſſimis ea auſum palam prodere, quæ aut aliis ſcriptis prioribus revinci poſſent, aut pugnantem ſibi haberent perſuaſionem veterem et communem." *Grot. de Verit.* l. i. §. 16.

When Moſes is accuſed or ſuſpected of writing in conformity with the coſmogonies of other nations, this at leaſt muſt be granted, that they are as much in conformity with him. Now it is remarkable, that while the former are ſo enveloped in fable, that no philoſopher pretends to compare his own ſyſtem with them; the latter is ſo ſimple and ſo clear, and ſo connected with the hiſtory of the earth and of man, that it is particularly open to examination, and capable of being verified. Had there been any foundation for the extravagant chronology of Manetho, Beroſus, or the ſtill more ancient records of Sanchoniathon, how could Moſes ever have dreamt of ſucceeding in an attempt to convince the world that none of theſe nations had exiſted for ſo long a term as 2500 years? Mr. Volney calls Moſes on one occaſion *artful* and *ſubtle*, and yet conceives he borrowed his coſmogony from India; agreeing with M. Dupuis all the while in aſcribing ſuch an age to the world as is wholly and entirely inconſiſtent with the

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Geneſis of Moſes. Had Moſes gone *beyond* the records of ancient nations, and carried his chronology much *higher*, he might indeed with reaſon have been reputed at leaſt as cunning as the Chaldeans, who, as Lactantius ſays, (ſpeaking expreſsly of their chronological extravagancies,) "in quo quia ſe poſſe argui non putabant, liberum ſibi crediderunt eſſe, mentiri." Lib. vii. 14. ſee alſo the notes to that chapter in the *variorum* edition. But where could Moſes's *art* or *ſubtlety* be, in beginning his hiſtory with a fact ſo perfectly in oppoſition to known and acknowledged records, had any ſuch really exiſted as it is pretended, and in the very midſt of the nations to whom thoſe records are aſſigned? for while Mr. Volney, M. Dupuis, and others, have concluded that Moſes borrowed from the Hindus, the German *New Expoſitors*, MM. Teller, Eichhorn, &c. ſuppoſed his coſmogony was borrowed from the Chaldeans and Egyptians. And yet ſo little did he reſemble thoſe he is ſaid to have borrowed from, that the learned Dr. Craven very properly enquires, "How was it that "the Jews drew *not* waters from the fountains of "Chaldea and Egypt, or *rather*, whence had *they* their "*clear* and *pure* waters, when all the ſprings were "every where muddy and corrupt?" See his *Diſcourſes on the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Diſpenſations*, p. 51. About 500 years before Chriſt, Democritus and many other philoſophers, who maintained that the world had had a beginning, applied themſelves to prove the newneſs of it by all the means that hiſtory and critical knowledge could furniſh; yet we do not ſee that it was ever undertaken to refute them ſolidly: though, had the pretended Babylonian and Egyptian antiquities been true, nothing would have been eaſier. See *Goguet*, vol. iii. 283.

Page 213. *note* (8).

If all that can be reaſonably done in this way has not yet been done, &c.] Nothing appears to be more difficult than to keep etymology within its proper bounds, when it is made the foundation of any ſyſtem. Though the very learned and reſpectable Mr. Bryant laid down rules for the conduct of ſuch enquiries, it is very doubtful whether he was not guilty of infringing them

them himſelf; and that many of his followers have done ſo, *is paſt all doubt*. Etymologies therefore muſt always be left to tell their own ſtory, and the diſcerning reader, to ſeparate what is reaſonable from what is fanciful; for that the whole is fanciful can never be pretended. As to the compariſon of ancient mythologies with the Moſaic writings, this certainly alſo admits of being carried too far; and the Abbé Houtteville, in his ingenious diſcourſe of the Authors *for* and *againſt* Chriſtianity, has given a very proper caution upon the ſubject in his review of the writings of the celebrated Biſhop of Avranches, M. Huet. The Bible tells the ſtory in a plain and ſimple manner; it expreſsly, and upon all occaſions, deſcribes idolaters as apoſtates; as having "gone aſtray," and "turned aſide" from the true and primitive religion; as having wilfully "become abominable, filthy, and corrupt." Their fables and abſurd additions therefore muſt be to themſelves; the original need not be too ſedulouſly ſought for in the midſt of ſuch rubbiſh; it is *miraculous*, and therefore proof enough in itſelf of the divine authority of the Pentateuch, and of the Hebrew accounts of the Deity, that, when every other part of the world fell into ſuch corruptions, the knowledge of the true God was preſerved among the Jews. And it may be a fit anſwer to make to thoſe who think the ſacred writers had a motive to impoſe upon the world in the ambition to appear as the founders of a religion, and the firſt miniſters of a divine revelation, that they particularly diſclaim the merit they might have pretended to, of being the firſt to promulgate the true religion; for they conſtantly refer to a time preceding the very firſt beginnings of idolatry; "I have declared, I have ſaved, and I have ſhewed, "*when there was no ſtrange God among you:*" which is the more to be attended to, becauſe Mr. Hume, and many of his way of thinking, peremptorily inſiſt upon it, that Polytheiſm, or Idolatry, was, and neceſſarily *muſt have been*, the firſt and moſt ancient religion of mankind. Mr. Hume even reſts his argument on the teſtimony of *the moſt ancient records of the human race*: "The farther we go back to antiquity, the more of idolatry do we find; *no marks, no ſymptoms* of any more "perfect religion." See his *Nat. Hiſt. of Religion*. Can any

any thing be more perfectly falſe? Again he ſays, "As "far as writing or hiſtory reaches, mankind appear to "have been *univerſally* Polytheiſts." Mr. Hume, I know, thought that *true hiſtory* began with Thucydides; but neither Mr. Hume, nor any other Freethinker, can abſolutely annihilate the teſtimony of the Bible. Could Mr. Hume pretend that King David did not exiſt before Thucydides? nor the Book of Chronicles, in which the prayer and thankſgiving of that righteous king are recorded, and in which is that noble teſtimony to the unity of God, not as a new or philoſophical diſcovery, but as derived from revelation and tradition, "O Lord, "there is none like thee, neither is there any God be- "ſides thee, *according to all that we have heard with our* "*ears.*" 1 Chron. xvii. 20. and 2 Sam. vii. 22.

Inſtead then of ſearching for reſemblances in the Pagan mythologies, which the Infidel is too apt to turn againſt us, as ſuppoſing all to be equally mythological, let us for ever inſiſt upon the notorious and marked difference between them; eſpecially in regard to the acknowledgment of that great and fundamental truth of all, the unity of God: which not only Mr. Hume, but Lord Bolingbroke aſſerted to be a diſcovery impoſſible in the earlieſt ages of the world. "This rational, this orthodox belief, this firſt true "principle of all theology, was not eſtabliſhed, nor "could be ſo, till—(when?) the manhood of philo- "ſophy." And yet, like Mr. Hume, who calls Moſes a barbarous writer of a more barbarous age, Lord Bolingbroke aſſures us, the notions of the ſacred penmen were plainly thoſe of an ignorant people, and an unphiloſophical age. And Voltaire, with his uſual flippancy, ſpeaking of the Jews, ſays, "vous demandez "quelle étoit la *philoſophie* des Hébreux—l'article ſera "bien court—ils n'en avoient aucune." His friend Diderot however lays it down as a maxim, that the idea of the unity of God could not be, but "le fruit "tardif des méditations humaines." It is incredible how men will perſiſt in overlooking the *marvellous* accounts which the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament contain, of the being, and moſt *undoubted* attributes of God. Every Freethinker admits that the Jews were a barbarous people, and lived in an obſcure corner, and

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were in no manner addicted to philoſophy; and yet in their writings, the antiquity of which it is impoſſible to doubt, the pureſt Theiſm, the moſt orthodox and fundamental principles of all theology, and actually a moſt correct chain of philoſophical reaſoning, are to be found, *Infidels themſelves being judges:* for Lord Bolingbroke and Diderot, whom I have cited, both admit that Abraham was a pure Theiſt; and the former, that the unity of God was acknowledged in the world previous to his vocation, (of which there is no *record* but the holy Scriptures:) and Mr. Paine admits that "the "xixth Pſalm, and ſome parts of Job, are true deiſti-"cal compoſitions, and are founded upon *natural philo-"ſophy*, ſince they *treat* of God through his *works*." And yet the ſacred writers made no claim to be accounted philoſophers; (ſee *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, vol. ii. 107.) they left philoſophy to inſtruct the heathens, as it ought to have done, and gratefully acknowledged, that *they* had the additional light of divine Revelation; ſee Pſalm cxlvii.

As to the collateral teſtimony to the truth of the Moſaic coſmogony, which Pagan mythologies are thought to ſupply, it ſeems to be a caſe ſufficiently admitted by Deiſts; while Moſes is continually held by them to be a plagiariſt, and to have borrowed, as it has been ſtated before, from the Egyptians, Chaldæans, Phœnicians, and laſtly from the Hindus. And Lord Bolingbroke expreſsly aſſerts it to be his opinion, "that three or four ancient "neighbouring nations ſeemed to have a common fund "of traditions, which they varied according to their "different ſyſtems of religion, philoſophy, and policy." Vol. iii. of his Works, p. 282. We want no more than this to be granted; only Lord Bolingbroke in another place is pleaſed to ſay, "We have nothing to do with "the antediluvian world." But we ſhall inſiſt upon it that we have every thing to do with the hiſtory of the antediluvian world, as recorded in the Geneſis of Moſes, where we not only have a regular account of the creation of the earth and of man, and of the origin of evil, but of the patriarchal religion, in which the unity of God was an acknowledged tenet. How much more right and reaſon have we to inſiſt upon no arguments being

being drawn from the poſſibility of the world being older, and of there having been more ancient records! If any exiſt more ancient than the Bible, let them be produced: whatever is not extant in any ſhape at all, is out of the queſtion. Are metaphyſical reaſonings, as Goguet obſerves, to deſtroy hiſtorical evidence? But even if any are extant older than the Pentateuch, the date of the *record* of the coſmogony is not the matter we are ſo much concerned with, as the dates of the *events recorded*, and the true nature of the *primitive, unadulterated* religion of the Patriarchs; in which unqueſtionably, according to Moſes, the unity of God was a diſtinguiſhing feature; a matter of Revelation indeed in the firſt inſtance, but which the ſacred writers do not appear to have been ſo unphiloſophical as not to have enforced and ſupported with ſuitable *arguments*. Indeed, if they are not to be ſuppoſed to have been inſpired, I think it would be eaſy to ſhew, (nor would the proofs which I have been at the pains to collect be withheld, but that there is not room to inſert them,) that, as *un*inſpired writers, they are better Philoſophers than any of the ſages of antiquity, Plato not excepted; more ſublime Poets than any of the ancient bards, Homer and Pindar not excepted; and more reſpectable, more honeſt, more undaunted advocates of the truth, than any of the ancient Theiſts, Socrates not excepted. Their deſcriptions of the Deity, their expoſure of the abſurdities of idolatry, their fortitude in the vindication of God's majeſty, and contempt of all popularity, acquired with any ſacrifice of their religious principles, are the points we have to attend to, when we compare them with the prieſts and prophets, poets and philoſophers of Pagan nations.

As to the collateral teſtimonies to the truth of the Bible, ſupplied by hiſtorians and other profane writers, ſo many have been at the pains to collect them, that they need not be given at length; and I have already referred to ſome writers, in whoſe works they will be found, at the end of Serm. IV. Many more might have been mentioned; but whoever wiſhes to purſue the ſubject, ſhould by all means conſult the references in Dr. Doddridge's *Lectures on Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity*,

vinity, publiſhed in 4to, Lond. 1763. an admirable addition to Grotius's celebrated 16th ſect. of his firſt book *De Veritate*, &c.

Page 215. *note* (9).

But though ſome have thought this poſſible, &c.] The origin of languages ſeems to be a reſearch which antiquaries cannot reſiſt; but few theories upon the ſubject ſeem to have met with any extenſive encouragement. As a theological queſtion, it is ſomewhat inconſiſtent to expect to trace the languages of the earth back to any one common ſtock, as I have ſhewn in the Sermon; nevertheleſs it is a reaſonable remark of I. Caſaubon's, that thoſe languages ſeem to have retained moſt of the Hebrew, that belong to countries moſt in the neighbourhood of Paleſtine. "Eſt enim veriſſimum, linguas cæteras eo manifeſtiora et magis expreſſa originis Hebraicæ veſtigia ſervaſſe, et nunc ſervare, quo proprius ab antiqua et prima hominum ſede abfuerunt." The ſame is obſerved in regard to other particulars by Dr. Hartley, in his *Obſervations on Man*, Prop. cxxiii. 4to edit. 1791. As many are ſtill buſy in tracing out the analogy of languages, and ſome the moſt remote and unconnected have been lately held to agree, I ſhall inſert the following *criteria*, which have lately appeared in the Edinburgh Review of General Vallancey's Proſpectus of an Iriſh Dictionary. "The Hebrew, Arabic, Chaldee, Syriac, and Phœnician, are indeed dialects of the ſame original language; and it may not be improper to mention the *criteria* by which we ſupport our aſſertion. Theſe dialects have the major of their words nearly the ſame both in ſenſe and ſound; their verbs are formed of a ſimilar number of letters; their moods, tenſes, numbers, and perſons, are formed in the ſame manner, and by the ſame letters or particles. All the ſix dialects agree in the declenſion of their nouns, and in the genius of their conſtruction: the nations which ſpoke them were contiguous, ſimilar in cuſtoms and manners, and their written hiſtory records the fact of their common original. Theſe are the *criteria* by which we maintain, that the affinities of all the tribes of mankind may be diſcovered with tolerable

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"accuracy." Too much certainly has been made of very ſlight and partial reſemblances, and the *mania* for *radicals* has often reminded us of the expedient of Pſammetichus recorded by Herodotus, and which upon the authority of the word *Beckos*, as is well known, transferred to the Phrygians the honour of being of ſuperior antiquity to the Egyptians: but only for a time; for Goropius Becanus had the ingenuity afterwards to wreſt the palm from the Phrygians, by ſhewing, that though Beckos ſignified *bread* in Phrygia, yet as Becker ſignified *baker* in German, the Germans were certainly the people pointed out by the exclamation of the Egyptian boys. The enquiry however, when conducted with ſobriety, is certainly always curious, but not, I think, ſo much connected with theology as has been often ſuppoſed. On the origin of alphabetical characters, ſee *Shuckford's Connection*, b. iv. and *Warburton's Divine Legation*, but particularly the Diſcourſes of the learned I. Johnſon, Vicar of Cranbrook, vol. ii.

Page 218. *note* (10).

The celebrated Aſtronomical Tables of the Hindus, however, have been ſuppoſed to ſupply us with data of much more certainty.] I ſhall endeavour to compreſs what I have to ſay upon this head into as ſmall a compaſs as poſſible, though ſo many circumſtances in the hiſtory of the world ſeem to admit of being brought together in illuſtration of the point I have to eſtabliſh, that much that is very curious muſt, I fear, be unavoidably omitted. The world has been ſo long amuſed with chronological extravagancies, as far as figures only are concerned, that it is not to be wondered, that when the Hindu records came to be examined, they ſhould alſo be found to abound in ſimilar perplexities. A people whoſe geographical ſyſtem of the earth makes the circumference of the globe 2,456,000,000 Britiſh miles, (ſee *Mr. Wilford's paper*, art. xviii. of the 5th vol. of the *Aſiatic Reſearches*,) and their mountains 491 miles high, may well be expected not to be behind hand with other nations, in their accounts of the antiquity of their country: a people who could invent for their god Brahma *a year* compoſed of the multiplication of two

two thouſand ages, (each of above four millions of *our* years,) by 360, may well be expected not to ſtand upon much ceremony either with time or numbers in the fabrication of a chronological ſyſtem. This is not ſaid merely to expoſe them; it is their character by all accounts, to be conſummately ſkilful in calculations, and in the combination and reſolution of numbers. Sir William Jones diſcovered in the duration aſſigned to the ſeveral Indian *Yugs*, or ages, an arrangement, exceedingly curious: to give it in his own words, "the duration of hiſtorical ages," ſays he, "muſt needs "be very unequal and diſproportionate, while that of "the Indian Yugs is diſpoſed ſo regularly and artifici- "ally, that it cannot be admitted as natural and pro- "bable. Men do not become reprobate in a geometri- "cal progreſſion, or at the termination of regular pe- "riods; yet ſo well proportioned are the Yugs, that "even the length of human life is diminiſhed as they "advance, from an hundred thouſand years in a ſubde- "cuple ratio; and as the number of principal *avatárs* "in each decreaſes arithmetically from four, ſo the "number of years in each decreaſes geometrically, and "all together conſtitute the extraordinary ſum of four "millions three hundred and twenty thouſand years; "which aggregate multiplied by ſeventy-one is the "period in which every Menu is believed to preſide "over the world.—The comprehenſive mind of an In- "dian chronologiſt has no limits; the reigns of 14 "Menus are only a ſingle day of Bramhá, 50 of which "have elapſed, according to the Hindus, from the time "of the creation." Sir William adds, that poſſibly this is only an aſtronomical riddle. (See the paper in the 1ſt vol. of *Aſiatic Reſearches*; *on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India.*)

The celebrated M. le Gentil, who has done ſo much to elucidate the ſubject of Indian aſtronomy, confeſſes that at firſt he diſdained to meddle with ſuch extravagancies. (*Mémoires de l'Académie*, 1772.) It is to him however, that we are chiefly indebted for the Aſtronomical Tables which will be the ſubject of this note, and which may not be treated with indifference, after the reſpect that has been ſhewn to them by two ſuch eminent and very learned men, as M. Bailly and Profeſſor

feſſor Playfair. The great queſtion ſeems to be, whether they were derived from actual obſervation, and what are the dates to be aſſigned to the particular obſervations on which they depend. Both M. Bailly and Profeſſor Playfair, it is well known, refer them to actual obſervations; and M. Bailly has fixed on the epoch 3102 before our æra, which is that of the Tables of *Tirvalour*, in preference not only to the epochs 1569, and 1656, which are thoſe of the *Narſapur* Tables, but to the epoch of the Tables of *Chriſnabouram*, viz. 1491 of our æra. M. Bailly however is for carrying back the Indian obſervations ſtill further, namely, to 1200 years before the Kali Yug, or to 4302 before Chriſt: but this he profeſſes to be only conjecture. What M. Bailly and Profeſſor Playfair moſt decidedly agree in, if I miſtake not, is, that the places of the ſun and moon, at the beginning of the Kali Yug, or 4th age of the Hindus, *muſt have been determined by actual obſervation*; and that two elements of the Hindu aſtronomy, viz. the equation of the ſun's center, and the obliquity of the ecliptic, ſeem to fix the origin of this aſtronomy 1000 or 1200 years earlier. Now the Kali Yug commenced anno 3102 before our æra; according to M. Bailly, Freret, and others.

I do not mean at all to diſcuſs the queſtion concerning the fact or æra of the actual obſervation inſiſted on, nor concerning the antiquity either of the Tables themſelves, or of the celebrated aſtronomical work, the *Surya Siddhanta*. A few obſervations upon each will be ſufficient, as it is principally my deſign to examine into the ſtate of the queſtion, as it relates to the chronology of the Bible, ſuppoſing what is moſt extraordinary in the caſe to be *true*. As to the fact—Mr. Marſden, who does juſtice to M. Bailly's very curious reaſonings upon the ſubject, and to the Indians' early knowledge of aſtronomy, and ſome parts of mathematics connected therewith, is diſpoſed to queſtion the verity and poſſibility of ſuch an obſervation, at ſuch a period, and conceives that the ſuppoſed conjunction was later, and ſought for as an epoch, and calculated retroſpectively; [*Phil. Tranſactions*, 1790;] and he ſhews it to have been widely miſcalculated. Mr. Bentley's calculations in the 6th vol. of the Aſiatic Reſearches, to ſhew that ſuch epochs might be aſſumed without much hazard of any perceptible

perceptible variation, are certainly very curious, and muſt be well known to every aſtronomer: his conjectures concerning the age of the *Surya Siddhanta* do not appear to be generally aſſented to. As to the epoch of 3102, which M. Bailly fixes on, he acknowledges to have choſen it in preference to others; firſt, becauſe there was an eclipſe at that time; and ſecondly, becauſe there was, according to the Indians, a conjunction of *all* the planets. But this latter circumſtance was not true; and M. Bailly himſelf ſays, the appearance of Venus muſt have been aſſumed through "le goût du "merveilleux." See the *Diſcours Préliminaire* to his *Aſtronomie Indienne, &c.* p. 28; and conſult Mr. Marſden's paper in the *Phil. Tranſactions* already referred to.

It is not however with the fact itſelf that we have ſo much concern at preſent, as I obſerved before, as with the evidence M. Bailly would adduce in corroboration of the point he wiſhes to prove; and which led him into a courſe of chronological reſearches by no means undeſerving our regard; as I think they particularly ſerve to ſhew, whatever M. Bailly's real intention might be in bringing them forward, that, of all the embarraſſed and extravagant computations of antiquity, none can with any reaſon be thought to aſcend higher than the patriarchal ages, nor with any clearneſs beyond the flood. It ſeems pretty generally agreed, that of all ſciences aſtronomy was the earlieſt cultivated; and there is great reaſon why it ſhould have been ſo. For in the night, the ancients probably had no other guide but the ſtars; and, at all events, no other means of marking time, than by the riſing and ſetting of the different conſtellations. [*Aſſemannus de Aſtronom. Arabum*, §. 1.] So that ſome imagined that Adam and Eve had correct notions of aſtronomy inſtilled into them for their uſe; (ſee the *Almageſt* of *Ricciolus*;) a conceit which, however fanciful, at leaſt ſerves to ſhew the great and almoſt indiſpenſable importance attributed to the ſcience in early ages: and we know that Joſephus accounted for the longevity of the Patriarchs, by the neceſſity there was that they ſhould outlive the period of the annus magnus, (600 years,) for aſtronomical purpoſes; and his references upon this head are numerous. *Ant. Jud.* lib. i. ch. iii. §. 9. (The Chaldæan *Neros* was a term of 600 years.)

years.) Nor is it out of our way to notice what he ſays of the proficiency of the family of Seth in the knowledge of aſtronomy, and of the pillars they erected to preſerve their obſervations; for M. le Gentil, in his paper on the Indian aſtronomy in the *Mémoires de l'Académie* 1782, inclines to think that even the preceſſion of the equinoxes was known before the flood, and that there was much more than time for ſuch a diſcovery from Adam, according to the chronology of the LXX. and Joſephus; and that this was one of the pieces of knowledge preſerved by Noah; in which alſo M. Caſſini ſeems to agree with him. He even obſerves, that the Indian Tables we are particularly treating of have a lapidary form, and conjectures therefore that they were originally engraved on ſtones; and as they ſeem to aſcend beyond the deluge, they might have been preſerved through it; a circumſtance which, he himſelf adds, Joſephus ſeems to confirm, with evident alluſion to Seth's pillars. But to return to M. Bailly. In the Preliminary Diſcourſe to his Indian Aſtronomy, he ſeeks to eſtabliſh the certainty of the *third* Indian age, and to reduce it to a near conformity with the Greek chronology of Scripture. M. Bailly's account of the Hindu ages is as follows.

The Indians count 17 ages from the birth of Brama: we are in the 18th.—The firſt 14 ages amount to "mille cinquante millions d'années:" in figures 1050,000,000 of years. Theſe are evidently fabulous. The laſt four ages are thoſe which chiefly fall under conſideration, and according to theſe the world is to laſt 4,320,000 years, according to the following diviſion;

The firſt age	1,728,000 years.
The ſecond	1,296,000 . .
The third	864,000 . .
The fourth	432,000 . .

Theſe are the chronological extravagances which M. le Gentil confeſſes he at firſt diſdained to meddle with. The two firſt M. Bailly thinks fabulous; but the third he is diſpoſed to admit as real, ſubject to ſuch reductions, as the cuſtom of diſtant ages ſeems fully to authoriſe. No caſe ſeems more determined than that the ancients had *years* of all lengths and deſcriptions;

of

of two weeks or fifteen days, half a month—of one, or two months; ſix months, &c. or thirty, and ſixty days, &c. All theſe were known in India, particularly that of the fortnight, or dark and bright halves of the moon: indeed both DAY and YEAR, we are aſſured, in India, mean no more than the *Saros* of the Chaldæans, viz. a *revolution*.

I have obſerved, that M. Bailly gives up the two firſt ages as fabulous; it is only the *third* and *fourth* that he meddles with, and the *third* which he labours to *eſtabliſh*; for the fourth, or Kali Yug, is generally admitted to be the current age from the flood. His aim is to ſhew that the Hindus are not without hiſtorical records, which might juſtify the chronology he contends for. But it muſt be recollected, that when M. Bailly, or any other perſon, is ſo ready to give up an extravagant computation, merely becauſe it ſeems ſo; if the Scripture account of the creation of the world is not true, no reaſon appears for conſidering ſuch a duration of ages as either imaginary or exaggerated; for the great queſtion is, whether the world is of the age Moſes aſſigns to it, or of *immenſe antiquity*, if not even *eternal*. We are not enquiring into a difference merely of days or years, or even centuries; not how long a patriarch lived, or a king reigned: but when the world was firſt inhabited, when deſtroyed, and when re-peopled. Theſe are epochs to be determined out of an infinity of time; for if the Bible is not true, Infidels acknowledge no preciſe limits to the duration of the earth, and ſome ſtill contend for its eternity. As different nations however are known to have adopted a variety of years, not ſolar and lunar only, but hebdomadal and diurnal, if I may ſo ſay; years of weeks, and days; we certainly appear, by a due examination into their modes of reckoning, if not to get a key capable of opening all their myſteries, yet one which may enable us to reduce many of their extravagances upon pretty certain grounds, and by compariſon to diſcover what is clearly artificial from what may be real. I have already mentioned in the Diſcourſe, the method adopted for adjuſting the accounts of Calliſthenes and Epigenes; a circumſtance to which M. Bailly particularly alludes in his Indian Aſtronomy,

and which is certainly a very good inſtance of the means that ſhould be adopted for reducing the extravagant accounts of antiquity: but I think it may be moſt manifeſtly ſhewn, that many computations of the ancients have either no connection at all with hiſtory, or are ſo manifeſtly artificial as to allow us to be very indifferent about the real value and importance of ſuch reckonings as *ſeem* to *exceed* the Bible chronology, but which have no hiſtorical records to ſupport them.

If I refer chiefly to the authority of M. Bailly upon this occaſion, it is for the following reaſons: firſt, that his talents and ingenuity are univerſally acknowledged; ſecondly, that his teſtimony on the ſide of Scripture is the more valuable from his known heterodoxy upon other occaſions; and thirdly, becauſe, as he had in this inſtance a favourite point to eſtabliſh, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that he has made all he could make of the hiſtorical records of India. In his Preliminary Diſcourſe then prefixed to his *Traité de l'Aſtronomie Indienne et Orientale*, the reader will find ſome of the moſt curious chronological computations of antiquity brought into ſuch an agreement as is certainly very ſurpriſing, and the more to be attended to, becauſe, whatever M. Bailly's notions at other times were, concerning the peopling of the globe, and the progreſs of arts and ſciences, he was here certainly proceeding upon what he held to be an undoubted *fact*; namely, that the poſitions of the ſun and moon in 3102 A. C. were derived from actual obſervation. He acknowledges that the obſervation is "affectée d'une erreur "que nous ne pouvons apprécier qu'en connoiſſant la "maniere d'obſerver de ces anciens peuples." However the fact he himſelf fully believes to have been ſo, and that this obſervation was further connected with a previous one, as I ſtated before. He allows the obſervation was not difficult to make, but that it appears to be authentic and original, becauſe, had the Indians only borrowed or adopted it, they muſt have adopted other things with it, as the obliquity of the ecliptic, &c. &c. which is not the caſe. But M. Bailly could not but be aware, that *any hiſtorical* record in ſupport of ſuch an epoch would be more ſatisfactory, than the mere fact of ſo remote an obſervation ſtanding alone. He does not admit

admit indeed, that the one would be *more deciſive* than the other, (though, in ſearching for hiſtorical records, he *tacitly*, at leaſt, allows this:) but he obſerves, "Si l'on "trouvoit un *manuſcrit Indien*, où il fût *dit expreſſément* "que l'an 3102 avant notre ère au minuit entre le 17 "et le 18 Fevrier, les Brames ont obſervé la lune dans "10ˢ 6° 0′, et le ſoleil dans 10ˢ 3° 38′ 13″, il n'y auroit "pas lieu d'en douter: il ſeroit évident que cette dé- "termination ſeroit une obſervation. Eh bien, ce que "les Indiens ne diſent pas, ſe dérive *directement* de "leurs Tables."

But we muſt confeſs, if it can be ſuppoſed poſſible that ſuch epochs might have been aſſumed, which Mr. Marſden and Mr. Bentley ſeem aſſured of, the want of any hiſtorical records of thoſe times would lead us at once to queſtion the antiquity and originality of the very Tables, in which the obſervation appears. M. Bailly however has ſpared no pains to diſcover hiſtorical records corroborative of his ſuppoſition; and as his purpoſe would be anſwered by eſtabliſhing the exiſtence of the 3d as well as of the 4th Hindu age, he labours to do this, and with great ingenuity; which, though it may not have been altogether ſucceſsful, is, I think, very inſtructive: for from thence we learn, that, among all the moſt known nations of antiquity, there was a ſort of agreement in dates, and revolutions, and cycles, which was really moſt extraordinary: in dynaſties alſo, and many other particulars. (See *Faber's Horæ Moſaicæ*, vol. i. 125, 126. and *Goguet's Orig. of Arts and Sciences*, vol. iii. 325.) M. Bailly fixes upon the families of the ſun and moon, that is, the dynaſties of *Surga-bans* and *Chandra-bans*, as the antediluvian inhabitants of the world; which he compares with the Peris of the Perſians, whom he would alſo reſcue from the gulph of non-entity, and the demi-gods of Egypt. The utmoſt he claims for them all is, that they ſhould be conſidered cotemporary during the third Indian age, which he conceives to have conſiſted of lunar years, and which he reduces to 2400 ſolar years; which added to 3102, the date of the Kali Yug preceding our æra, make together 5502. And according to Chioniades and Chryſococca, whom he cites, the Perſians, it ſeems, carried back the year of the world to 5507; a proof, ſays M. Bailly, of their being derived from the ſame ſource. Certainly the conformity

is curious. M. Bailly concludes that the Kali Yug was the beginning of the Hindu reckoning by ſolar years; and he thinks the princes of the races of the ſun and moon were poſſibly deſigned to ſignify thoſe who reckoned by lunar and ſolar years reſpectively. But here ſeems to be an inconſiſtency; for if the computation by ſolar years only commenced with the Kali Yug, how can the children of the ſun be carried back to the third age? a circumſtance of ſome moment, becauſe it is one point with M. Bailly to prove their correſpondence with the reign aſſigned to the *ſun* in Egypt, of 30,000 years; which, upon reduction into lunar years, agree nearly with the 3d Hindu age, in which the *children* of the *ſun* are ſaid to have reigned. The Egyptians indeed do appear to have reckoned by lunar years or months before the flood; and this ſerves to reconcile their account with the computation of the LXX. and the Chaldæan reckoning: (ſee *Jackſon's Chronological Antiquities:*) but I queſtion whether the ſame may be ſaid of the third Hindu age; becauſe the term aſſigned to it by M. Bailly, in ſolar years, multiplied by 360, makes exactly 864,000; but 864,000 divided by 28, leaves a fraction: ſo that the third age would ſurely appear to have conſiſted of years of *days*, like all the others. M. Bailly himſelf makes this reduction of the ſeveral ages, and the reſult becomes curious, from another conformity, which *muſt* be conſidered as in one inſtance at leaſt fabulous; for the products of the four ages ſeverally, divided by 360, amounts in all to exactly 12,000, which is the very period aſſigned by the Perſians for the duration of the world, which *they* alſo divide into four quarters or ages. To make this evident, we muſt underſtand that to every Hindu age an interval was aſſigned of different lengths; to the 1ſt one of 800 years, to the 2d 600, to the 3d 400, and to the 4th 200. The ages with their intervals are in ſolar years of 360 days each,

1ſt 4800.	in days . .	1,728,000.
2d 3600.		1,296,000.
3d 2400.		864,000.
4th 1200.		432,000.
12000.		4,320,000.

Now as the conjecture of the Perſians concerning the duration

duration of the world *muſt have been* merely fanciful, ſo in all likelihood were the Hindu ages; as well as numerous other computations with which the world has been amuſed. For though M. Bailly contends for the reality of only the 3d and 4th ages, the two firſt might almoſt as reaſonably be inſiſted on; for the kings of heaven and kings of earth in the Chineſe annals are ſaid to have reigned altogether exactly 432,000 years, which is not only the amount of the 4th Indian age, but multiplied by 7 (the days in a week) produces 3024,000 days, which is exactly the number of days in the two firſt Indian ages, and which, M. Bailly ſays, agrees with the two firſt Chineſe races of Tien-hoang, and Ti-hoang, and with the Dives of the Perſians; as the third Chineſe race of Gin-hoang agrees with the third Hindu age and the Peris of the Perſians: ſo that, conſidering M. Bailly's general opinion concerning the age of the globe, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that though, in his Preliminary Diſcourſe to the Treatiſe on Indian Aſtronomy, he profeſſes to ſet aſide the two firſt Indian ages as fabulous, he would have been under no difficulty to have found vouchers for their reality, had he choſen it; though nothing can tend more to prove the fabulouſneſs and contrivance of the whole, than the above numerical coincidences, whatever may have been the origin of them, and the cauſe of their agreement. The fact ſeems to be, that beyond the Moſaic æra they are clearly fabulous and artificial, though all of them may perhaps have been *contrived* and founded upon traditions concerning both the antediluvian and poſtdiluvian ſtate of the globe: for M. Bailly has certainly moſt ingeniouſly reduced many ancient accounts to a near conformity with the Greek and Samaritan chronology of Scripture, though the numbers by which they reckoned, and the unexpected reſults that ariſe in many inſtances from the reſolution and compariſon of thoſe numbers, muſt ſtill induce us to ſuppoſe they were not ſtrictly hiſtorical, but in moſt inſtances fanciful and ſuperſtitious. Beroſus's 120 Sari, which he ſays *preceded the deluge*, at 3600 years a Saros, amount to 432,000 years. This then agrees with the Chineſe and with the Hindus, but it is not the number of the *third*, but of the *fourth* Hindu age; it is not antediluvian, but

but poſtdiluvian. This number M. le Gentil tells us repreſents in India a certain number of revolutions of the equinox at 54 ſeconds a year. *Mémoires de l'Acad.* 1782. The Chineſe again ſay, that the heavens were 10800 years forming: now 10800 is the amount of the three firſt Hindu ages in ſolar years, with the intervals. Here then is a conformity ſcarcely to be conſidered as accidental. Again, by the Perſian account the earth is given to the *Dives* for 7000 years prior to the birth of Adam, and then ſucceeded the *Peris* for 2000 years: now the 7000 years agree with the two firſt Hindu ages without the intervals, and the 2000 with the third Hindu age in the ſame manner. I have not taken notice of Mr. Bentley's remark, that the cyphers were added to the Hindu ages to convert them into poetic years; which the reader will find in the 5th vol of the Aſiatic Reſearches; though this muſt certainly contribute to ſhew how arbitrary and fanciful they muſt be, and how little they have to do with real hiſtory; at leaſt beyond a certain period: for as the Kali Yug is clearly the current *poſtdiluvian* age of the world, I would by no means pretend to ſay that the third Hindu age is not quite as reſpectable, as a chronological period, as the Egyptian or Chaldæan dynaſties, or the period aſſigned by Abugiafar to the Peris, which M. Bailly has made ſo much of. My only idea upon the ſubject is, that the traditions concerning the true chronology of the globe, both antediluvian and poſtdiluvian, are at the bottom of all the extravagant computations of the ancients; that they have preſerved what is true, in a *form* more artificial than can be conſiſtent with the hiſtory itſelf; that they have in many inſtances carried them back beyond the æra of the creation, through what M. Bailly calls "le goût du "merveilleux," and perhaps in the way of rivalry, of which they have all been accuſed; and that many are entirely aſtronomical, and, as Mr. Bryant ſays of Manetho's famous cycle of 36525, belong rather to an ephemeris, than to true hiſtory.

Numberleſs have been the attempts to reſolve the number juſt alluded to; perhaps Mr. Bryant's is as ſimple as any: it was the amount, he ſays, of the days in a cycle of 100 years; for if one year conſiſts of 365 days.

days and one fourth, in one hundred years they would make exactly 36525. Syncellus's account is, that it was the multiplication of 1461 by 25, or the two great cycles of the ſun and moon multiplied into each other, which completes the revolution of the Zodiac by the reckoning of the Egyptians and Grecians. M. Freret's explanation of Syncellus's account he himſelf thinks original. He tells us the Egyptians divided their Zodiac into 365 degrees; the number of the days in their year: but as the year was a quarter of a day ſhorter than the true ſolar year, they added 36500 quarters of a day, or 25 years, to their period, for the greater exactneſs. See *Marſham* upon this curious number; *Shuckford's Connection*, b. i. and *Jackſon's Chronological Antiquities*. Jamblichus, it is well known, makes the writings of Hermes amount to this very ſum of 36525; which might alone ſerve to ſhew how little it had to do with real hiſtory.

I have endeavoured to expreſs myſelf as clearly as I could, upon this curious point of Hindu chronology; becauſe, as it is ſuppoſed to involve a real fact, and a real epoch, I think it the beſt view that can be taken of the Hindu chronology. For the ſolution of the mythological and aſtronomical intricacies of the ſyſtem, I muſt refer at once to the writings of Sir William Jones, Mr. Wilford, Mr. Wilkins, Mr. Davis, Mr. Bentley, and Mr. Maurice. M. Bailly's endeavour to authenticate the exiſtence of the third Hindu age, appears to have brought out ſome curious facts in the hiſtory of the world; and though the preciſe limits aſſigned to the *fourth*, or *current* age, muſt ſhew how much of conjecture and fancy there muſt be at the bottom of their computations; yet it is well to know what is admitted to be fabulous, and what is the reſult of ſuch reductions and compariſons with the annals of other nations, as M. Bailly thought it worth his while to enter into. Theſe I ſhall now ſtate in his own words; for the calculations on which he relies, I muſt refer to the work itſelf. "La durée du troiſième âge "Indien eſt appuyée ſur la durée correſpondante de cet "intervalle donné de 2222 ans par les Chaldéens," (i. e. 120 Sari, according to Suidas,) "et de 2256 ans "par Joſeph et les Septante. Si l'on joint à ces deux "témoig-

" témoignages ceux qui réſultent des 30,000 années du " regne du ſoleil en Egypte, et les 2000 ans du regne " des Peris en Perſe, on verra que l'exiſtence et la du- " rée du troiſième âge Indien ſont établis ſur les anti- " quités des ſix plus anciennes nations du monde, ſa- " voir, les Chinois, les Indiens, les Perſes, les Egyp- " tiens, les Chaldéens, et les Hébreux; et on aura, ſui- " vant ces différens peuples, un tableau des différentes " durées qu'ils donnent à cet intervalle, en exceptant " les Chinois, qui ſemblent en avoir conſervé la mé- " moire, et non la chronologie.

" Les Septante - - -	2256 ans[a].
" Les Chaldéens - - -	2222.
" Les Egyptiens, regne du ſoleil -	2340.
" Les Perſes, regne des Peris -	2000.
" Avec l'intervalle Indien - -	2400.
" Les Indiens, troiſième âge. Race du ſoleil	2000.
" Avec l'intervalle - -	2400.
" Par les 78 générations - -	2340.

" Il nous ſemble donc démontré, autant que les faits " de cette haute antiquité peuvent l'être, qu'il y a eu " un intervalle ſemblable à celui que nos livres ſaints " comptent entre la création et le déluge, dont les " Chinois, les Indiens, les Perſes, les Egyptiens, et les " Chaldéens ont conſervé la mémoire; non-ſeulement " la mémoire de ſon exiſtence, mais celle de ſa durée, " et avec une certaine conformité, en admettant, comme " cela eſt vraiſemblable, que ces différentes nations " partent de différentes époques." *De l'Aſtronomie Indienne et Orientale*; *Diſcours Préliminaire*, Part II. pp. cxxvi. cxxvii.

I am not myſelf intending to prove the exiſtence of the third Hindu age, or to give being to the dynaſties of the ſun and moon, which have much more reaſonably, perhaps, been concluded to be only ſolar and lunar cycles: but ſuppoſing them to have been hiſtorical, and that the obſervations in the Tables of Tirvalour were really of the remote age attributed to them, ſtill, ſo far from their being in contradiction to the holy

[a] There are computations exiſting, (ſee note, p. 222,) which come within two of M. Bailly's computation, and which he ſeems to have been unacquainted with.

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Scriptures, they ſeem exactly to carry us back to the patriarchal ages, in which aſtronomy has always been ſuppoſed to be particularly cultivated, and of which times many profane nations ſeem to have preſerved a certain ſort of chronology, much reſembling what M. Bailly has conceived of the third Hindu age; that is, mixed with fable, and requiring reductions and other arrangements; but thus indeed being capable of being brought into a near agreement with the computation of the Septuagint, Joſephus, and the Samaritan verſion of the Pentateuch. Beyond this nothing ſeems at all to be known or diſcovered; and *this* is *much further* than the ableſt Orientaliſts will admit, that we have any true hiſtory: Sir William Jones's ſummary of the whole matter being, "that the two following propoſitions be conſidered as indubitably eſtabliſhed; that "the *three* firſt ages of the Hindus are chiefly mythological, whether their mythology was founded on "the dark enigmas of their aſtronomers, or the heroic fictions of their poets; and that the fourth or "hiſtorical age cannot be carried back farther than "2000 years before Chriſt; that whatever be the comparative antiquity of the Hindu Scriptures, we may "ſafely conclude, that the Moſaic and Indian chronologies are perfectly conſiſtent; that Menu, ſon of "Brahmá, was the Adima, or firſt created mortal, and "conſequently our Adam." See *Sir William Jones's Works*, vol. i. pp. 309. 326.

The commencement of the Kali Yug, by every reckoning, comes near to the Septuagint chronology of the flood; nearer to the Samaritan; and if 3102, which is the epoch M. Bailly and M. Freret aſſign to it, be at all right, coincides exactly with Joſephus, for that is the very term of years he reckons from the flood to the Chriſtian æra; and that every Hindu age is ſuppoſed to terminate with a deluge, is well known. As to the difference between the Greek and Hebrew chronology of the Scriptures, it ſeems to be a point that never can be adequately ſettled: but I apprehend no man's faith in the main articles of the ſacred hiſtory will ever be ſhaken by the differences ſubſiſting. There is ſomething ſingular, however, in the ſuſpicions that have been formed on the ſubject; for while ſome have ſup-

ſuppoſed, that the Egyptian and Chaldean dynaſties were framed to invalidate the chronology of the Septuagint, which happened to appear at the ſame time, (ſee *Origines Sacræ*, p. 29.) others have apprehended, that the Seventy extended the Hebrew account, in order to put the Jews upon a par with the Egyptians and Chaldæans; though indeed a few centuries were but a very inadequate addition for this purpoſe. Thoſe who are curious in this matter muſt conſult the authors who have written expreſsly upon this ſubject, as *Baronius*, and *Voſſius*, *Pezron*, and *le Quien*; and they will find a very good account of the controverſy, under the article *Chronologie*, in the *Dictionnaire des Arts et des Sciences*. The Preface to the 8vo. edition of the *Univerſal Hiſtory*, 1747, ſhould alſo by all means be conſulted, where is a table drawn up from *Strauchius*, *Chevreau* and others, of the different computations of time between the creation and birth of Chriſt, as adopted by various authors. *Mr. Jackſon's Chronological Antiquities* are entirely in defence of the Greek chronology; to a conformity with which he very ingeniouſly reduces the Egyptian and Chaldæan records. Attempts have been made alſo, as in all other inſtances, to ſettle this controverted point in chronology by the aid of aſtronomy. See *Bedford's Scripture Chronology demonſtrated by Aſtronomical Calculations*.

But whatever becomes of the queſtion, the great and moſt important truths of the holy Scriptures cannot be affected by it; the creation, the fall of man, the deſtruction of the world, &c. &c. And if any profane accounts ſhall ſeem to be nearly in agreement with the Greek chronology, it is, I think, as much as can be required or expected. There is one obſervation I cannot forbear to make with reſpect to the Indian Tables. M. Bailly is very unwilling to admit, that the miſſionaries could have any concern with them; and he particularly draws an argument to this purpoſe from the circumſtance of the Indian Tables of mean motions agreeing neareſt with Caſſini's, which did not exiſt in 1687, when the Siam Tables certainly did. If, ſays he, the miſſionaries communicated the European aſtronomy to Aſia, they could in 1687 only have known the Tables of *Tycho*, Riccioli, Copernicus, Bouillard, Kepler, Longomontanus,

montanus, or the Tables of Alphonſus. He alſo ſays, that the Indian aſtronomy differs in ſo many points from all others, that it muſt have been original. P. lxxv. Now it is ſomewhat remarkable, that in M. Bailly's Tables of compariſon, Tycho Brahe's Table of mean motions comes the neareſt but one to the Indian Table; and at p. xii. M. Bailly notices it as a remarkable thing, that in the Narſapur Tables an annual inequality is attributed to the moon, ſimilar to what Tycho Brahe had diſcovered: an inequality not known at Alexandria, or in Arabia. It is well known, that the Chineſe Tables occaſioned ſimilar ſurpriſe, till Caſſini and Picard diſcovered their extraordinary agreement with the Tables of Tycho Brahe; and upon queſtioning Father Couplet, (who was a very ſincere man,) he acknowledged, that his brethren had reformed the Chineſe Tables by them. See *Renaudot on Chineſe Learning*; who adds, that he had heard the ſame from Couplet's own mouth. Couplet went to China in 1650, and returned in 1680.

As to the motive alleged by M. Bailly for preferring the epoch of 3102, becauſe of the ſuppoſed conjunction of the planets, it ſeems trifling, and rather to reſemble ſome fanciful methods of fixing the epoch of the creation; two of which, as not unſuitable to the ſubject of this note, occur to me at this moment. The one to prove the truth of the Hebrew, the other of the Greek chronology of Scripture. "A remarkable aſtronomical "epoch," ſays M. la Place, in his *Traité du Mécanique céleſte*, Paris, 1802, "is that in which the great axis of "the terreſtrial orbit coincided with the line of the "equinoxes; for then the true and mean equinoxes "were united. I find, by the preceding formulas, "that this phenomenon took place towards the year "4004 before Chriſt, a period at which the majority "of our chronologiſts place the creation of the world." The author of the other I know not; but his argument is drawn from the revolutions of the great comet which appeared in 1680, and whoſe period was determined by Sir Iſaac Newton to be 575 years: and he makes out, that, according to the Greek chronology, (I know not which computation he could adopt,) twelve revolutions would exactly have been completed in 1680,

as well as 230 revolutions of Saturn, 575 of Jupiter, and 3600 of Mars. Such are the results of retrospective enquiries after astronomical epochs, and which may possibly have been the very way adopted to fix the commencement of the Indian Kali Yug. But this I pretend not to decide: if the epoch of the Tirvalour Tables was derived from actual observation, it is certainly very extraordinary; but we may not pronounce it impossible. According to some computations, and even according to Dr. Grabe's Septuagint, 144 years might then have elapsed after the deluge. M. Bailly confesses it was not a difficult observation; and as to the want of instruments, even Tycho Brahe had no assistance from the telescope. The science of astronomy, to a certain degree, was probably of the first importance; and the invitation to the study of it great in those eastern climates, where, as Sir Robert Barker tells us, in his curious paper on the observatory of *Benares*, "without "the assistance of optical glasses, the Bramins have an "advantage unexperienced by the observers of more "northern climates. The serenity and clearness of the "atmosphere in the night-time in the East Indies, ex-"cept at the seasons of changing the monsoons, is dif-"ficult to express to those who have not seen it, be-"cause we have nothing in comparison to form our "ideas upon. It is clear to perfection; a total qui-"etude subsists; scarcely a cloud to be seen; and the "light of the heavens, by the numerous appearance of "stars, affords a prospect both of wonder and contem-"plation." *Philosophical Transactions*, 1777.

I shall conclude this long, and I fear tedious note, with the following passage from an old translation of a work of the celebrated Amyraut. "Furthermore, "whereas it was well said by one, that things of great-"est antiquity are best; and the philosophers them-"selves, when they treat concerning God and religion, "extremely cry up antiquity, and attribute much to "the dictates of their ancestors; as if nature itself had "suggested to them, that there was a source of all "these things, from which they that were neareſt it "drew the purest and sincerest waters; whereas, accord-"ingly as they are derived through several minds, as so "many several conduit-pipes, they become corrupted

"and

" and tinctéd with extraneous qualities, and contract " impurity. If there be found a doctrine, that has all " the marks of antiquity, and there appears nothing in " the world that equals it, it ought not to be doubted, " but that the ſame proceeded from him that is " more ancient than all, as being author of all things. " If the language in which it was revealed be as the " mother and ſtock, from which others, though very " ancient, are ſprung; if it deſcribes the hiſtory of the " world, and of men, and their propagation upon the " earth; if it affords the demonſtration of times, and " that without it the knowledge of chronology would " be more intricate than a labyrinth; if it deduces its " hiſtory from point to point with an exact correſpond- " ence; if it clearly and certainly relates hiſtories, that " are as the body of the fabulous ſhadows that we ſee " in the writings of the moſt ancient authors in the " world; who will doubt, but all which they have is " taken from thence, and that we ought to refer what " is therein depraved and corrupted thereunto, as to " its principle, and have recourſe thither to learn what " we are ignorant of? If there be found a religion, " all whoſe parts accord together with an admirable " harmony, although it has been propounded at ſeveral " times, and by ſeveral perſons in ſeveral places; if " there be a diſcipline, a doctrine, a book, a ſociety, " in which God himſelf ſpeaks to men in a ſtyle and " manner agreeable to the eminence of his majeſty, " diſplays his juſtice to them moſt terrible in its ap- " pearance, diſcovers his power in its higheſt magniſi- " cence, and gives them to ſound the breadth and " length, depth and height of his infinite mercies: " laſtly, if examples of an incomparable virtue be found " therein, with incitations and inſtructions to piety; " ſuch as are not to be paralleled any other where in " the world; 'tis an indubitable argument, that they " are proceeded from ſome other than the human " mind, or the ſchool of MAN!"

SERMON VI.

PSALM XC. 2.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made; thou art God from everlaſting, and world without end.

HAVING in my laſt Diſcourſe taken a general view of the chronology of the world, as far as it appears capable of being aſcertained, from our preſent knowledge of the *hiſtory of man;* I propoſe in this Diſcourſe to conſider what it has been judged poſſible to collect concerning it, from a *phyſical examination* of the *earth itſelf.*

In what manner the natural hiſtory of the earth has been reſorted to, for proofs either againſt or in ſupport of Revelation, will be beſt underſtood from a brief view of the preſent ſtate of the ſeveral queſtions that have ariſen upon the ſubject.

And firſt, there are ſtill many who object entirely to the Scripture account of the formation of the earth; they think it altogether unphiloſophical, as well as unbefitting the majeſty of God. They think the ſix days' operations a limitation of God's power, as far as the Deity only is concerned; and quite inadequate to the production of ſuch a maſs, if every thing is to be referred to the operation of ſecondary cauſes, (which they generally pretend,) to which, for want of any means of actual meaſurement, they are in the habit of aſſigning whatever *time* they pleaſe; for time is inexhauſtible. Some will not admit of any beginning at all; while others contend for a multiplicity, indeed an infinity of revolutions; and ſuppoſe, that we are only tenants for a time, of a manſion, the materials of which at leaſt have already endured for ages without limit. All theſe invent and promulgate their different theories at pleaſure; and as it is the conſtant practice to begin with ſetting aſide all preceding ſyſtems, we have, as it were, a new one every day.

Other geologiſts there are, who confine their views more to the period and to the pheno-

phenomena of the deluge, as recorded by Moſes; and though theſe in their objections generally run into the ſame extravagances in regard to the high antiquity of the globe, yet they are contented to ſet aſide the cataſtrophe of the deluge; believing, with ſome reaſon, that with *this*, the other parts of the relation will fall of courſe.

Now of theſe ſeveral objectors and opponents of Revelation, to ſome the reply generally made is, that the Scripture account of the creation is no fit ſubject for philoſophical ſpeculation: that it was not deſigned to be a philoſophical, but a *miraculous* account, independent of the *common* courſe and operation of all ſecondary cauſes. And this ſurely is the moſt reaſonable reply that can be made (t). Others, however, oppoſe to theſe adverſe theories, theories of their own, either rendered conformable to, or elſe regularly deduced, as they think, from the very words of Scripture. Theſe have great ſcope for their ſpeculations; and however unſatisfactory and unphiloſophical many of them may appear, they are at leaſt as ingenious as any others, and ſeem at leaſt to have, in the very words of Scripture, (what the reſt cer-

tainly want,) ſome ſure foundation to ſupport them.

It is thus that one very eminent naturaliſt, and very pious Chriſtian (*), who has particularly diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his zealous endeavours to ſtem the torrent of modern infidelity, has ſuppoſed that, conſiſtently with the deſcription of Moſes, the arrangement of the chaos could only have commenced with the introduction of ſome active principle among the other elementary materials, capable of producing what he calls a ſtate of *liquidity;* and this principle, upon philoſophical grounds, he conceives to have been that firſt grand diſplay of *light,* ſpoken of in the Geneſis, as proceeding, not from any phyſical ſource or cauſe whatſoever, but ſolely from the power and will of God.

This introduction of light into the chaotic maſs is made the beginning of a courſe of *ſucceſſive* and diſtinct operations, which *ſeems to be* abſolutely neceſſary to account for the preſent ſtructure of the globe, though too generally overlooked; for which, if we are to find a philoſophical reaſon, it muſt ſurely, in many inſtances, point to the proceſs of chemical precipitation from a fluid, the

moſt

moſt uncertain of all operations to judge of, as a *paſt* event; and this, if the conjecture of the writer alluded to does not ſerve to explain it, may ſurely be expected to baffle every enquiry of modern theoriſts. The baſis of our globe moſt undoubtedly muſt have owed its arrangement to ſome cauſes not now operating: to ſpeak philoſophically, the chaos, which ſeems to be univerſally admitted in ſome way or other, was probably a more complex menſtruum than any that has ever ſince exiſted[a]; and the operations that took place in it, beſides being eſpecially directed by the will of God, as the firſt diſpoſer of all ſecondary cauſes, muſt have depended upon a variety of circumſtances, of which we are now quite incapable of judging. This is not only acknowledged by ſome of the moſt eminent naturaliſts of the preſent age, but might, one would think, be obvious to every perſon at all acquainted

[a] Anaxagoras ſays, before the Νῦς, or God, ſet things in order, πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμοῦ πεφυρμένα, *all things were confuſed together.* And Anaximander called the ſea, τῆς πρώτης ὑγρασίας λείψανον, *the remainder of the primitive moiſture.* See alſo the ΘΕΟΓΟΝΙΑ of Heſiod, and *Ovid. Metam.* lib. i. Homer calls the *ocean*, Γενεσις πάντεσσι. Il. xiv. 246.

with chemiſtry, and the extraordinary effects flowing from every poſſible mixture of heterogeneous matters. Whoever knows any thing of the great and incomprehenſible variety producible by the elective attractions of different ſubſtances acting freely in ſome common menſtruum, and the many different accidents by which ſuch attractions may be influenced, ſet in motion, retarded or accelerated, could ſcarcely, one would imagine, preſume to determine, that the circumſtances either of the ſolid or fluid parts of the globe were at the period of their firſt arrangement the ſame as at preſent: and till this is aſcertained to a certainty, notwithſtanding every help we may have derived from the advancement of knowledge, all our ſpeculations concerning *paſt* tranſactions muſt be in the greateſt degree vague and hypothetical. (3)

But though this is moſt undoubtedly the caſe, yet the very rapid progreſs lately made in thoſe two particular branches of natural philoſophy, mineralogy and chemiſtry, has led many to ſuppoſe, that the times are peculiarly favourable for ſuch enquiries and ſpeculations (4). And *Reaſon* has been buſily

ſily at work, to apply theſe new diſcoveries to the fabric of the earth; and in an avowed diſregard of Revelation, to account philoſophically for its origin, its firſt arrangement, and its preſent condition and appearances. Had not ſuch ſpeculations already led many to abandon their belief of the revealed account of the creation of the earth, and eventually alſo of ſome of the moſt important truths of our moſt holy religion, I ſhould be among the firſt to think ſuch diſcuſſions unfit for the pulpit. But as phyſics have thus been forced into connection with theology, it may be well to review the Moſaic account, in the face of theſe new diſcoveries, and at the ſame time to compare it with one at leaſt of the moſt modern theories of human Reaſon. I ſhall begin with the latter.

Among the ſeveral theories ſtrictly *philoſophical* and *rational*, (that is, according to the preſent acceptation of thoſe terms, entirely independent of Revelation,) and in which all the new diſcoveries in mineralogy, chemiſtry, and meteorology are made the moſt of, I ſhall ſelect one, which has recently appeared on the continent, as being

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in ſome meaſure founded on the conjecture of one of the moſt admired foreign Naturaliſts of the age. According to this theory then we are to conceive, that our planet is a fragment of the ſun; detached by the ſhock of a comet, and drawn back to and detained in its preſent orbit by the force of the ſun's attraction: that this fragment was detached in a highly *ignited* ſtate, from its parent maſs, which is concluded to be, from its *moſt obvious* effects, a *maſs of fire*. This fragment is ſuppoſed to form the *nucleus* of our globe, and to have brought with it the vaporous atmoſphere of the comet, with which it was enveloped; and by means of which it became incruſted in time, by the depoſition of the earthy particles originally held in ſolution. I need not, I am ſure, detain you with an account of the author's hypotheſes, as to the ſeveral chemical operations that enſued, which he regularly traces, from the firſt motions and combinations of the ſeveral ſubſtances, fixed and volatile, to the compoſition and arrangement of our principal ſtrata. The ſum and ſubſtance of the whole really is, that this theory is not only contrary to ſome of the firſt princi-

principles of geometry and mechanics, but involves in it the notion of the ſun's being a *ſolid maſs of fire;* which has been lately ſhewn to be highly improbable, if not decidedly falſe, by many truly ſcientific experiments and obſervations; and thirdly, it depends on the vain aſſumption, that the true method of the compoſition of our mineral ſubſtances is capable of being aſcertained, though no ſuch analyſis has been at all effectual, to the enabling us, in any one inſtance, to produce ſuch ſubſtances, by any mixture of the aſſigned ingredients. (5)

This may ſerve, I think, as one ſpecimen at leaſt of the application which Reaſon would make of the new diſcoveries in phyſics, to frame a world! if not in direct oppoſition to the Moſaic account of the creation, yet manifeſtly in contempt of it.

Let us then turn to the Scripture account, and ſee what that really is.

Not raſh, or vain, or abſurd enough to pretend to know the ſpecific cauſes, that operated phyſically in the firſt production of this world, Moſes, in *his* relation of events, is at once pious, rational, and majeſtically ſublime. It was *his* duty and office to record

cord the *act* of creation; not to meddle with the *mode* of it: to tell us that God *made* the world, not *how* he made it[b].

An eminent Sceptic has obſerved, with reference particularly to the ſacred writers, "that there is no greater temptation to a "man to tranſgreſs the bounds of ſtrict "truth, than to have the credit of being a "miſſionary, prophet, or embaſſador from "heaven[c]." Had Moſes then been unduly influenced by any ſuch temptation, why did he not ſuppoſe, that thoſe to whom he addreſſed himſelf would expect him to diſcloſe more to them than he attempts to tell? why did he not pretend to be let more deeply into the ſecret, as every Pagan mythologiſt, every ancient philoſopher, and above all, every modern theoriſt has conſtantly done? Why do we not read, in *his* account, of the

[b] Ὁ μέν γε περὶ τ̃ κτίσεως ἡμῖν διαλεχθεὶς, τοσοῦτον ἡμᾶς ἐδίδαξεν, ὅτι ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν κ̀ τὴν γῆν· ἡ δὲ γῆ ἦν ἀόρατος κ̀ ἀκατασκεύαστος· ἐξαρκεῖν ἡγούμενος τὸν ποιήσαντα αὐτὴν κ̀ διακοσμήσαντα διαγγεῖλαι·—τίς δὲ ἡ οὐσία ταύτης περιεργάζεσθαι, ὡς μάταιον κ̀ ἀνωφελὲς τοῖς ἀκούσι παρῃτήσατο. *Baſil. adverſ. Eunom.* lib. i. 238. edit. Steph. See alſo *Philoponus* περὶ Κοσμοποιΐας, κ. α. where are ſome excellent remarks to the purpoſe.

[c] Hume.

jumble

jumble of atoms, the combinations and oppoſitions of the dry and the humid, the hot and the cold? why do we not read of the prolific virtues of the ſun eliciting living creatures from the turbid chaos[d]? Why is there ſo little ſaid of ſecond cauſes (6) in this particular part of the Moſaic records, but for this expreſs reaſon, that ſecondary cauſes themſelves were then to receive their origin, and to have their firſt principles of motion impreſſed upon them? for in other parts of the Pentateuch it is thought to be no derogation from the majeſty of God, to deſcribe him as operating by the intervention of ſecondary cauſes. This is a point of ſingular correctneſs in the hiſtory of Moſes, which no mythologiſt, no merely human writer, has attended to. All ſecondary cauſes are peculiarly ſhut out, as they ſhould be, where the Spirit of God muſt neceſſarily have been the ſole cauſe of motion, and of all the operations that then took place. We particularly read of the earth bringing forth graſs, and other vegetable productions, be-

[d] See *Cudworth*, and *Univerſal Hiſtory*, vol. i. and *Dr. Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, Letter xxx.

fore

fore the ſun was appointed to ſpread abroad his rays: and as to the production of fowls and fiſhes, cattle and creeping things, and even man, the Lord of all; no ſecondary cauſe, in either caſe, that could be naturally adequate or applicable, is aſſigned; but the fowls are made from the water, and man from the duſt of the ground.

Is this account irreconcileable to Reaſon? What is it then that it tells us? Not that the world is eternal, which only a few of the ancient, and very few modern philoſophers have ventured to maintain; but that "in the beginning God created the heavens "and the earth;" let this expreſſion, according to the idiom of the Hebrew language, expreſs more or leſs. That this creation was out of nothing, ſeems plainly to be implied[c] by the next circumſtance related of the earth, namely, that its firſt creation

[c] *Chalcidius*, in his *Commentaries on Plato's Timæus*, draws the ſame concluſion from this expreſſion. See him cited by Bp. Stillingfleet, *Origines Sacræ*, b. iii. ch. 2. 278. See alſo *Barrow's Sermons*, vol. ii. Serm. XII. §. 7. and *Theodoret. Hiſt.* lib. i. c. 19. where is a curious argument to the purpoſe. Buffon has made uſe of this interval between the creation of matter and production of light.

was

was deſtitute of order, mere matter: "And "the earth was without form, and void." As to the ſubſequent reduction of it into order, and ſucceſſive creation of plants and animals from the fowls of the air to mankind; to deny the poſſibility of it is abſurd, and to queſtion the probability, a mere impertinence. For why might not the creation be effected by ſucceſſive acts? and why not in a given time? As for the diſtinct periods ſpecified, and the proportional differences in the productions of the ſix days, it is enough to aſſert, what Reaſon cannot controvert, that to an omnipotent and eternal Being there can be no limitations in regard to time or modes of acting, but what are entirely dependent on his own ſupreme will. To Him undoubtedly a thouſand years are but as a day. He might make the world in a moment, in a day, in ſix days, in ſix thouſand days; he might have made only plants on one day, and feathered fowl on another, and creeping things and beaſts on another; or he might have made every thing in one day, by his almighty fiat.

Had Moſes pretended to give an account of the primary qualities of matter, and the

ſeveral

ſeveral proceſſes by which the body of this earth obtained to be what it is; we might well have ſuppoſed his account to be fabulous, merely from theſe two conſiderations: firſt, that no knowledge of ſuch proceſſes being to be derived from tradition, or deduced by argument, we could only know them from Revelation; and ſecondly, the revelation of ſuch matters would be altogether ſuperfluous, being wholly void of uſe. We do not need to know, nor could we therefore reaſonably expect to be informed, of the exact primary modifications and motions of matter, by which the world acquired its preſent form: but to know that God created the very matter whereof it is formed, and that his divine Spirit reduced things to the order in which we now behold them, and even that this came to paſs in *ſix* days, are all points of extreme uſe and importance; eſtabliſhing God's omnipotence and ſelf-exiſtence in the fulleſt manner, and laying the beſt and ſureſt foundation for the obſervance of the Sabbath. In regard to which latter circumſtance, it muſt be remarked, that we have here, and no where elſe, a regular hiſtorical record of the *hebdomadal*

madal diviſion of time; which is now, and was in the earlieſt ages, by all accounts, ſo very generally adopted. It has been lately ſaid, that the Indians *muſt* have communicated this ſubdiviſion of time, which was exactly the fourth part of their month of twenty-eight days, to the weſtern parts of the world; and conſequently, that *we* alſo derive it from thence[r]; and the remarkable coincidence of the names of the days of the week, and the circumſtance of their being reſpectively dedicated to the ſame deities and planets, is alleged as the proof of this. But there can be no doubt, that as Chriſtians we derive it ſolely from the books of Moſes; and the adoption of the names of the days, though, for what we know, derived, as they allege, from the Eaſt (7), has been entirely accidental. Moſes either wrote before ſuch names had been given to the days of the week, or ſubſequently. If he wrote previouſly, then there is no reaſon to doubt of his account being the true one; if ſubſequently, and he wrote only from his own

[r] *Bailly, Hiſtoire de l'Aſtronomie Indienne et Orientale. Diſcours Préliminaire.*

inventions, or borrowed what he wrote, as has been insinuated, it must be granted, that, instead of adopting, it is most likely he would particularly have rejected a division, which must have appeared to give such countenance to the most prevailing idolatry of those times. The hebdomadal division, though originally of divine institution ([8]), might very probably, from the mere coincidence of numbers[g], have led afterwards to the *planetary* distinction of the days[h], among a people who had fallen off from the worship of the true God; and, as Maimonides reports of the Chaldæans, would acknowledge no other Gods but the stars, to whom they made images and statues: to the *sun*, of gold; to the moon, of silver; and to the rest of the planets, of the several metals dedicated to them[i]: which clearly shews, that

[g] Philoponus περὶ Κοσμοποιΐας, λογ. ζ'. κεφ. ιδ'. p. 282.

[h] See *Leng's VIth Boyle's Lecture*, p. 180; *Campbell on Miracles*, 218. Note; *Jenkin's Reasonableness of Christianity*, vol. i. 101, 102, &c.; *Jackson's Chronological Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 21. Note; and *Law's Theory of Religion*, p. 48; where he positively affirms, in opposition to *Le Clerc*, *Not. ad Grot. de Ver.* lib. i. 16. that the method of reckoning by weeks was much more ancient than the observation of the seven planets.

[i] *Mose Nevoch.* p. 3. c. 29.

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the oriental hebdomadal diviſion of time, ſo far from being merely aſtronomical, was in ſome inſtances at leaſt entirely idolatrous. But to return from this digreſſion.

That the fabric of this globe beſpeaks an origin much anterior to the æra aſſigned by Moſes, depends on ſpeculations, which, however cautiouſly conducted, may never be allowed to diſprove a fact [k], capable of almoſt poſitive demonſtration (o). That the chief uſe of this globe of earth is to be the abode of man, cannot be doubted. The great and moſt material fact therefore to be decided is, When did man firſt ſtand in need of this abode? It matters nothing to us what the world was previouſly; without ſuch an inhabitant as man, it could be no more to us than what the wild and deſolate and unfrequented parts of the earth are at this day: of which, as it concerns no man to take notice, ſo need we not be ſolicitous as to ſuch a ſtate of the globe we dwell on. Surely our Reaſon may be brought to aſſent to theſe three propoſitions; that in the beginning God created the maſs it conſiſts of; that it

[k] The origin of the human race.

was, previouſly to the introduction of our great progenitor, "without form, and void," whether in its firſt original ſtate, or, as ſome writers have ſuppoſed[l], by the diſſolution of a former ſtate; and that it was reduced to the order we now ſee it in, for the eſpecial purpoſes of our race, by the immediate decree of God's providence. In what manner the ſtrata became ſo arranged as we ſee them; what time was neceſſary for the formation of ſuch depoſitions from a watery fluid, or for ſuch concretions from an igneous one, as we now behold, it may be amuſing to calculate; but it can be of no uſe or certainty; of no certainty, for the reaſons already ſtated; of no uſe, becauſe, ſhould the mere matter of this globe even be proved to have ſubſiſted ages and ages before the creation of Adam, and to have undergone numberleſs revolutions, I *know not* that it could be of any concern to our race[m]. We date our title to the poſſeſſion of it, and dominion over it, from Adam; and have no need to aſcend higher. I ſay from Adam, not only becauſe we are told ſo in

[l] See Note (3). [m] See Note (3).

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the firſt chapters of Geneſis, but becauſe our Saviour and St. Paul have alſo inſiſted upon it.

One event certainly is recorded by Moſes, to which the face of the earth might be expected to bear teſtimony: I mean the deluge. Such a revolution could ſcarce fail to leave moſt durable traces behind it; but yet, in what degree, and to what extent, it may *now* be very difficult to determine. But that there are evidences of a ſubmerſion of the continents of the preſent earth, none can deny; and therefore, before we enter upon enquiry how or when ſuch diluvian matters were depoſited as we find them, it muſt be admitted to be extraordinary, that this great event, recorded by an hiſtorian whoſe knowledge of the face of the earth muſt have been circumſcribed within limits of a known extent, is not to be ſet aſide from any direct want of evidence, even in ſituations and places not known to exiſt at the time he wrote. Let us recollect, that it is of an *univerſal* deluge that Moſes writes; and that he aſſures us the waters covered the very tops of the hills. It may be ſo, ſome will ſay: on the tops of the hills in the neigh-

bourhood of Judea he obſerved ſhells and other marine exuviæ; the ſpoils of a partial deluge of thoſe regions: and it was eaſy to perſuade his countrymen, that a flood, extending over all that tract of country known to them, had extended over all the world. But how might ſuch a *mythologiſt* have been detected, when new diſcoveries had brought to light all that we have ſince learnt of Europe, Africa, Aſia, and the whole continent of America? If the marine exuviæ in one part of the globe are allowed to be an evidence of a partial deluge, would not the want of ſuch *reliquiæ* in any extenſive region, be a proof againſt the univerſality of the Moſaic deluge? Here again then I muſt maintain, that the want of contradictory evidence ought to be allowed to operate as a confirmation.

I enter not at preſent into the queſtion, whether the then continents were overwhelmed, and the bottom of the ſea left dry; or whether we now ſee only the remains of the very waters that covered the hills deſcribed by Moſes; becauſe all I propoſe to enquire after is, whether there are not, in all parts of the globe, marks and ſigns of the

the water having covered all that is now dry land? The poſſibility of ſuch a cataſtrophe as the deluge is a diſtinct queſtion; and the effects deſigned by it, as related by Moſes, render it a queſtion, which regards only the providence and power of God, which thoſe muſt have leave to meaſure by their own Reaſon, who have ſo little Reaſon as not to ſee the abſurdity of it (°). However, I cannot but obſerve, that ſome of the lateſt diſcoveries in meteorology may ſerve to ſhew, that hitherto we have been incompetent to judge even of the phyſical cauſes, that may have operated: and ſome of theſe, particularly the convertibility of water into air [n], or air into water, may have had a very material effect, and ſhould teach us to be cautious how we apply our feeble calculations, to meaſure and determine any reputed acts of Providence.

The ninth verſe of the firſt chapter of Geneſis tells us, that ſuch was once the ſtate of the globe, that, in order that the dry land ſhould appear, all the waters under the heaven required to be gathered together into

[n] See *M. de Luc's Experiments with the Hygrometer.*

one place: and why might not a mere revocation of this decree reſtore things to their priſtine ſtate, when no dry land was viſible? The cataſtrophe of the deluge, for what we know, may be fully ſufficient to account for all thoſe ſurpriſing circumſtances of foſſil bodies found in places where no correſpondent animals or vegetables now exiſt (11); for beſides other conjectures, that have been formed, the occaſion of the deluge, as repreſented by Moſes, may poſſibly have been ſufficient to vindicate the idea, that the inclination of the axis of the globe underwent a change at that time*; or if not then, perhaps before, or perhaps ſince; we know nothing certain. That elephants once exiſted in Siberia, and crocodiles in our own country, proves nothing contradictory to the Moſaic records; which give intimation of at leaſt two very important changes and revolutions; namely, the curſe of the earth, and the deluge. As far as a change of climate only is ſuppoſed to be intimated, the veracity of Moſes on this head is not more reaſonably to be queſtioned, than the veracity

* See *Howard's Scripture Hiſtory.*

of

of Juvenal, Horace, Diodorus, Strabo, Ovid, Polybius, and Varro; all of whom, as is well known, have actually deſcribed things quite different from what we now experience in the places they mention. The two former ſpeak of ſuch ſevere winters at Rome as are never heard of now. Many paſſages of Horace ſuppoſe the ſtreets of Rome full of ſnow and ice; but in our days the Tyber no more freezes at Rome, than the Nile at Cairo. However, of this we may be aſſured, that philoſophy can ſupply no actual proof againſt the probability of ſuch a cataſtrophe as the Moſaic deluge; while we have this conſtantly to allege in ſupport of it, that the continental parts of our globe all bear teſtimony to a ſubmerſion of them at one time or other: that naturaliſts of the higheſt eminence, in contradiction to many falſe proofs that have been brought forward of the high antiquity of our preſent continents, have aſſured us, that *their* obſervations have led to an entirely different concluſion; and that as far as the ſuperficial parts of the earth can be held to ſupply proper chronometers, they all tend to prove the *ſmall* antiquity of our preſent

preſent continents[p]: that no one monument of human art, or even human exiſtence, clearly prior to thoſe times, has been yet diſcovered: no medals, no inſcriptions, no utenſils, no ornaments of man have been found, indicative of a greater antiquity than that aſſigned by Moſes[q]: while the fact itſelf undoubtedly ſtands corroborated by many collateral teſtimonies (12). And this latter circumſtance is certainly moſt to our purpoſe; for it is not the phyſical hiſtory of the earth we require to be inſtructed in, by the means of Revelation; but the hiſtory of man, as a moral and religious being.

The earth is ſolid and compact enough for our uſe; fertile enough; abundant in all things needful both for our ſupport and our comfort: yet it certainly does not appear ſo methodically arranged as to ſuffer us to ſuppoſe it to have been free from great revolutions and cataſtrophes. Uſeful as it is, and beautiful as it is, in its very irregularities, we might ſurely be juſtified in con-

[p] See Notes (2) and (11).

[q] *Minute Philoſopher*, Dial. vi. 287.

cluding,

cluding, that an irregular arrangement of the original depoſitions of the chaos, might from the very firſt have been more fitted to our wants and purpoſes, than one more uniform. If the ſtrata had continued in what was apparently their firſt form, in concentric coats, we ſhould have known perhaps only the outermoſt, or in ſome excavations a ſmall number more. What a want of variety in regard to ſoils, and conſequently perhaps to the growth and production of plants, might this have occaſioned! How many mineral ſubſtances, both of uſe and ornament, might have for ever remained concealed in the bowels of the earth! and, inſtead of the richly variegated face of nature, which now ſerves to delight the eye, and exhilarate the heart, one[r] uniform plain would have extended through all countries, interrupted only by the ſtill more uniform ſcenery of the watery element.

[r] See *Milton's Paradiſe Loſt*, b. ix. 115. *Theodoretus* περὶ Προνοίας, λογ. β'. *Nichols's Conferences*, vol. i. 35, 36. *Ray on the Creation*, 34, &c. *Derham's Phyſico-Theology*, b. iii. ch. 4. *Sullivan's View of Nature*, vol. i. 105. *Liebknecht's Elementa Geographiæ General. (de Montium uſu.) Wallerius*, §. xxviii.

What

What particular revolutions may have occaſioned the many diſlocations of ſtrata, which now ſerve to vary the face of the globe, and to which we owe the abrupt precipice, the towering Alps, the cataract and volcano, and other bold features of nature, it is vain to enquire. Fire may have done much, and water more; but of the ravages of water we have a ſuccinct account; not written by a naturaliſt; not compoſed from a ſurvey and examination of the ſeveral parts of the globe; not framed to ſupport an hypotheſis; but ſimply related as an act of God, to puniſh a wicked and diſobedient race. The ſecondary cauſes put in motion for this purpoſe were ſuch as we might expect would produce great alterations in the face of the globe. "The foun-
"tains of the great deep were broken up,
"and the windows of heaven opened; and
"there was a continuance of rain on the
"earth for forty days and forty nights."
The effects of theſe events muſt, we may well ſuppoſe, have been both awful and extenſive; even perhaps to the actual deſtruction and ſubmerſion of the then ſubſiſting continents; which is the theory of one celebrated Naturaliſt

raliſt of the age[s], founded on very extenſive obſervations, and ſupported by our own verſion of the Scriptural account of the curſe, "Behold I will deſtroy man, *with* the earth;" a reading, which the Septuagint and Vulgate countenance[t]. At all events, we may conclude it to have been a moſt ſtupendous revolution; and ſuch as not only may ſerve us moſt fitly to account for ſome of the moſt ſtriking phenomena and irregularities obſervable in the great maſs of the globe; but without which it ſeems in many inſtances impoſſible to account for ſome of the moſt obvious appearances.

Even as a queſtion in philoſophy, if we reject the Moſaic account, we muſt ſubſtitute another; and this diſtinction between us will ſtill ſubſiſt, that *we*, who have ocular demonſtration of the fact, namely, of the univerſal ſubmerſion of our continents, at one time or other, cannot by any hypotheſis explain it to the general ſatisfaction of the world: while Moſes has both recorded and

[s] *De Luc.* See Notes (3) and (11).

[t] See *Foxton's Remarks on Burnet's Archæologia*, at the end of his *Doctrina Antiqua de Origin. Rerum*, p. 162. Note; and *Jamieſon on the Uſe of Sacred Hiſtory*, vol. i. 241.

ex-

explained a fact, of which he could not, in the nature of things, when he wrote, have had any ſenſible or experimental knowledge; but which, beſides all other teſtimonies, the face of the whole globe, and the obſervations of naturaliſts, have been ſince found, in a moſt ſurpriſing manner, to corroborate and confirm ([13]).

NOTES

NOTES TO SERMON VI.

Page 277. note (1).

AND this ſurely is the moſt reaſonable reply that can be made.] The Jews, whoſe Memorial I had occaſion to notice in my third Diſcourſe, give the following reaſon for rejecting the Moſaic records, as *ſacred* documents. "La religion qu'on nous a enſeignée étoit toute rem-"plie de principes myſtiques. L'hiſtoire du *monde pri-*"*mitif* étoit myſtérieuſe, obſcure, incohérente; les é-"venemens étranges, et reſſemblans ſi peu, juſques dans "les plus petites nuances, aux phénomenes du *monde* "*où nous vivons*, qu'ils nous paroiſſent preſque incroya-"bles." It is true, beſides the books of Moſes, they confeſs, that they had been taught to regard the *Talmud* of equal authority; and therefore they might with ſome reaſon be ſuſpicious of *this* part of their education: but to object to *any* account of the origin of things, merely becauſe of its *diſagreement with preſent appearances*, is no leſs than abſurd; though it may ſeem to have the countenance of ſo eminent a philoſopher as Mr. Hume. For it is certainly in the higheſt degree *unphiloſophical*, to make experience the ſole teſt either of paſt or future events: the utmoſt we can learn from experience is, the *uſual courſe of nature*; but how or when ſuch *became* the uſual courſe of nature, muſt for ever baffle our reſearches: theſe things are for ever confounded. Nature will admit the obſerver and experimentaliſt enough into her ſecrets, to enable them to cooperate with her in converting to the uſe of man the faireſt of her productions, and to calculate upon the probable reſult of many curious operations: but when ſhe herſelf was ſet to work, and how ſhe became empowered to do what ſhe has done and ſtill does, ſhe cannot inform

inform us, if ſhe would. Nor can ſhe in any manner aſſure us how long the preſent courſe and chain of operations may continue. The *creation muſt have been miraculous*: the ſeed muſt have exiſted before the tree, or the tree before the ſeed; the hen before the egg, or the egg before the hen; and each of theſe, with a view to preſent experience, is a miracle. And in the fabric of the very body of the earth, let us aſcend as high as we pleaſe; let us bring its ſubſtance from the ſun or a comet; let us ſet attraction, and gravity, fermentation, depoſition, cryſtallization, and what we will to work, in order to its arrangement, this is really nothing to the purpoſe; things could not be as they are now, when theſe firſt began to operate: and that they have *eternally* operated is not merely difficult to prove, but is a propoſition, which abſolutely reſiſts all proof.

Epicurus, had he but admitted into his ſyſtem a Providence, and final cauſes, might have defended his atomical combinations againſt the philoſopher for ever, upon his own plea, of things being otherwiſe in the world now, than when it was produced: for though nothing could be more abſurd, than to fancy that a jumble of unintelligent atoms could be more capable at one time of producing things than at another; yet certainly, had God choſen *ſo* to form the world, and all things in it, it would be no argument againſt ſuch a coſmogony, that ſince that time things have been otherwiſe propagated and continued. Such a jumble of atoms might, under the providential direction of God, have formed the *firſt* man; whereas the *firſt* man could not have been formed, as the ſpecies has been ſince propagated. In all theories of the world, therefore, there is certainly a point where we *muſt* ſtop, and where *miracles* muſt be reſorted to; but it requires no ſmall degree of prudence to know exactly where to ſtop. "If we would give credit," ſays the learned Dr. *Nieuwentyt*, in the Preface to his *Religious Philoſopher*, "to thoſe who pretend to tell us ſuch things, as how "God made the world, put all things together, pro- "duced and continued motion, &c. &c. we muſt needs "conceive, that there was no more wiſdom requiſite "to bring this glorious frame of the world into ſuch a "beautiful order as we ſee it, and to continue it in the "ſame,

" ſame, than what the authors of ſuch books were " maſters of." This is certainly moſt true; and yet, how many ſtill continue forward and eager to diſcloſe to us, not only what the preſent appearances of the earth may be ſaid to indicate, and by what principles of motion ſhe *ſeems* to be governed; but whence ſhe came, and exactly how every thing came to be as it is! The queſtion, as it concerns the ſacred books, is merely, whether philoſophers can diſcover any thing in the works of God, that poſitively contradicts the Moſaic hiſtory. That the Moſaic hiſtory ſhould contradict their preconceived notions of things, is not to be wondered at; eſpecially when they are unreaſonable enough to expect, that it ſhould be at all conformable to the preſent courſe of things.

In judging of the Moſaic coſmogony, we do not want philoſophers to tell us, whether God could make the world in ſix days, or according to the order deſcribed by Moſes; whether he could make man of the duſt of the ground, and infuſe into him the breath of life: we are entirely aſſured of the poſſibility of theſe things; and what is more, of the abſolute neceſſity of ſome ſuch commencement of things. And therefore we do not even require philoſophers to tell us, whether a more fit method could have been deviſed; it is a point they never can reſolve. " God has left us no " anſwer to thoſe that aſk, why he did not make the " world in a day, or why not ſooner; nor why he made " ſo many creatures, that ſeem to be of no uſe; and a " thouſand other queſtions. God has reſerved ſuch " kind of objections to the anſwer of his own ſove- " reignty." *Wolſley on Atheiſm.*

It has been very well ſaid by one author, that, in order to know God thoroughly, we ſhould be Gods ourſelves; and the ſame may be ſaid, in many reſpects, of his ways and his works. We muſt not be too inquiſitive into the *quomodo* of things. How cauſes now operate, we may be permitted to inveſtigate; but how THE CAUSE OF CAUSES ſhall operate, let us preſume not to determine. " A quoi d'abord," ſays M. de Luc, in his *Reply to the Jews' Memorial*, " voudriez-vous pou- " voir comparer le *monde primitif*, c'eſt-à-dire ſans " doute, *le commencement des choſes obſervables*, pour que

" la Raiſon humaine, qu'ici vous établiſſez juge, pût le " comprendre, et décider, s'il a *dû* être où ne pas être à " la maniere décrite par Moïſe? Il eſt impoſſible que " vous trouviez aucun objet de comparaiſon, ni dans " l'obſervation ou *l'expérience*, ni dans aucun principe " *à priori*; prétendre le trouver, c'eſt n'avoir pas réflé- " chi ſur la nature de la choſe, qui tient à l'acte de " *créer*." This is ſtrongly put, but does not at all exceed the truth. The *mode* of *creation* we can have no means of aſcertaining; and it is abſolutely vain to ſpeculate beyond what now appears to be *the courſe of things*. " Homo naturæ *miniſter*, et *interpres*, tantum " facit et intelligit, quantum de naturæ ordine, re, vel " mente, *obſervaverit*: nec amplius ſcit, aut poteſt." *Nov. Org.* lib. i. aph. 1. which an eminent modern geologiſt renders, " Man is but the miniſter and interpreter " of nature, and can neither extend his power nor his " knowledge *a hair's breadth beyond his experience and* " *obſervation of the preſent order of things*." *Playfair's Illuſtration of the Huttonian Theory*, p. 18.

Whether the world was made according to the ſame rules and methods, it is impoſſible for us to know; though the world is now *preſerved* by mechanical laws, (and yet not that univerſally, ſee *Profeſſor Jenkin*, vol. ii. ch. 9.) there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe it to have been ſo made at firſt. " The origin of the univerſe," ſays the ſame learned writer, " was by the immediate " hand of God, before the appointment of the ſeveral " laws, which afterwards were to take place: and we " might as well endeavour to reduce the working of " miracles to the ſtanding laws of nature, as the crea- " tion of the world. For certainly, of all miracles, " the creation of the world muſt be the greateſt; not " only as it ſignifies the production of matter and mo- " tion out of nothing, but as it was the putting things " into ſuch order, as to make them capable of the laws " of motion ordained for them." " On ne me perſua- " dera pas," ſays Wallerius, (I have only a tranſlation to refer to,) " que le Tout-puiſſant ſe ſoit ſervi, dans " l'ouvrage de la création, des loix que lui-même a " dictées à la nature." *De l'Origine du Monde*, §. xix.

Mr. Hume, in his poſthumous works, as cited by Dr. Darwin, in his *Zoonomia*, ſect. xxxix. 4. 8. concludes,

cludes, that the world might have been *generated*, rather than *created*; and the Doctor inclines to think, that, "if we may compare infinities, it would seem to re-"quire a greater infinity of power to cauſe the *cauſes of* "*effects*, than to cauſe the effects themſelves." But *God*, as Moſes repreſents the caſe, in firſt cauſing the effects, cauſed alſo the cauſes of ſucceeding effects: man, and other animals, and the vegetables of the earth, were created by his FIAT; all perfect in their kind, and with *inherent* powers of *future propagation*.

It is wiſeſt then to regard every thing as proceeding now according to the laws *of* God; but not to make ſuch rules and principles, and modes of action, (as too many do,) laws of invincible neceſſity *to* God himſelf. The planets certainly appear to perform their revolutions round the ſun by the niceſt combination of two mechanical forces; but how impoſſible is it for us ever to aſſign the phyſical cauſes, which enable them to deſcribe their ſeveral orbits! If we ſhall have truly diſcovered the principle of attraction, the projectile force will for ever elude our reſearches: and perhaps, after all, there is no other attraction or projectile whatſoever concerned, than the will of God. What the earth *is*, we may with reaſon enquire; what it *has been*, none can certainly tell us better than Moſes; (his inſpiration out of the queſtion.) Where it is, we may with reaſon alſo endeavour to diſcover; but whence it came, none can ever inform us but God himſelf: and as this information ſeems to be withheld, in the only records of the creation accounted ſacred, we may well regard it as a matter of no poſſible concern to us, while we have faith in the leading doctrine of the whole; namely, that "in the beginning GOD created the HEAVENS "and the EARTH." "For my part," ſays the celebrated M. Huygens, in the concluſion of his ΚΟΣΜΟΘΕΩΡΟΣ, or *Conjectures concerning the Planetary Worlds*, "I ſhall be very well contented, and ſhall count I have "done a great matter, if I can but come to any know-"ledge of the nature of things as they now are; never "troubling my head about their beginning, or how "they were made; knowing *that* to be out of the "reach of human knowledge, or even conjecture."

It is not to *evade* the force of any philoſophical theo-

ries then, that the Theologian inſiſts upon the Moſaic coſmogony being a *miraculous* relation of things: it is truly unphiloſophical to ſuppoſe it would have been more credible, had it not been ſo: it is its peculiar diſtinction, and exactly ſerves to place it on a *different footing* from all the world-making ſyſtems of other nations; though Mr. Paine is pleaſed to inſiſt upon it, that they are all alike: and Dr. Toulmin (whoſe works I cite merely becauſe I know they have been *publiſhed*, for more unphiloſophical works I never read,) affirms, that no account of the creation carries with it more the face of probability, than the Gentoo Fable of *Burmha*. The Gentoo Fable of Burmha is certainly miraculous enough; but the miracles are not miracles operated by God towards the production of the viſible things of this earth, but the miracles of Burmha himſelf, and his family; which have no relation whatever to the viſible order of things. (See an ingenious and lively *Anſwer* to this ſtrange writer, by the *Rev. Ralph Sneyd*, 1783.) Moſes relates the miracle of the creation in a mere hiſtory of the *effects* produced by the fiat of God: other coſmogoniſts, even when they refer theſe effects to the will of God, will perſiſt in telling us, not what ſupernatural, but what natural cauſes operated to produce theſe effects; whereas Moſes is philoſophical enough to refer the firſt effects ſolely to the *cauſe of cauſes*; thoſe effects themſelves indeed including the cauſes of ſubſequent effects and operations. I call this philoſophical, becauſe I ſee no other poſſible way of accounting for the preſent ſtate of things: for even had the world been formed according to ſuch laws of motion as are now neceſſary for its preſervation; had the ſeveral ſtrata and mineral beds been produced according to ſuch proceſſes as we ſhould ſuppoſe capable of ſimilar effects now; yet, not only the *animals* of the earth, but the whole tribe of *vegetables* muſt have been miraculouſly brought into exiſtence. No cryſtallizations, no fermentations, no elementary combinations whatſoever will now, I apprehend, be ſuppoſed capable of having produced a ſingle blade of graſs. The advancement of knowledge, which has determined us to reject all ideas of ſpontaneous or equivocal generation, muſt particularly ſerve to prove to us the neceſ-

ſity

ſity of a miraculous interpoſition in the firſt inſtance, in regard not only to animals, but to vegetables; no combinations of matter that we know of, or laws of motion, being adequate to produce either a perfect plant without ſeed, or a perfect ſeed without the parent plant.

I ſhould not have dwelt ſo long upon this, but that among thoſe who have been eager to treat the coſmogony of Moſes, as a mythologue or allegory, ſome have apprehended that the whole is to be conſidered as an Oriental hyperbole, which, not making any diſtinction between the *mediate* and *immediate* acts of God, refers every thing to the Deity by a mere figure of ſpeech. This is expreſsly alleged by the Jews of Berlin, as one reaſon for their incredulity: but the caſe is not applicable, where the queſtion relates to the creation of the world. Every thing may be ſaid to be immediately the act of God, by ſuch a figure of ſpeech, while the act of *creation* and *miracles* muſt alone be really ſuch, without any figure of ſpeech. Thus when God is ſaid to have "*planted* a garden eaſtward in Eden," this may ſeem, from the mere uſe of the term "planted," to be only a figure of ſpeech: but when it is added, that out of the ground the Lord God made every tree to grow that is pleaſant to the ſight and good for food, this may reaſonably be regarded as no figure of ſpeech, or Oriental hyperbole; for how could trees grow at the firſt beginning of things but by the *immediate* agency and appointment of God? And I think the 11th verſe of the 1ſt chapter of Geneſis ſufficient anſwer to every ſuch objection; for I know not how graſs could ever have grown, (to ſpeak philoſophically), or herb, or fruit-tree, had not God originally cauſed them to ſpring out of the ground, all of them in a condition to yield ſeed, and fruit, (whoſe ſeed is in itſelf,) for the future ſupply and maintenance of man and beaſt.

Page 278. *note* (2).

It is thus that one very eminent naturaliſt, and very pious Chriſtian, &c.] Though in the preceding note I have expreſſed myſelf generally unfriendly to all ſuch ſyſtems and theories as carry us back to the firſt commencement of things, it being my ſettled opinion that no obſervations whatſoever will ever inform us of the exact

truth of matters; and that even if this globe of earth *was* formed by ſuch phyſico-mechanical laws, as operate at preſent in its preſervation, yet that they muſt have operated at the æra of the creation, under ſuch extremely different circumſtances, as to baffle all our enquiries; yet I am by no means deſirous of paſſing over ſuch teſtimonies, either for or againſt revelation, as the body of the earth may be thought by any to ſupply. My object is only to diſcover what the reſult ſeems to be, of the application of this teſt: and as *modern* opinions are what I have chiefly propoſed to examine, through the whole courſe of theſe Lectures, M. de Luc's theory may reaſonably take the lead, among thoſe which have been recently advanced in corroboration of the Moſaic coſmogony; for this venerable and very eminent naturaliſt is perſuaded, that the holy Scriptures are entirely in correſpondence with geological phænomena. He looks upon the deluge, and the chronology of that event, to be capable of poſitive proof; and though his ſpeculations aſcend far beyond that period, yet as the deluge was the fulfilment of a prophecy, he juſtly regards the confirmation of this event to be a direct proof of the divine authority of the Scriptures, and to be ſufficient to eſtabliſh the divine miſſion of the author of the Pentateuch.

His idea is, that at the deluge the ancient continents ſunk, and the original bed of the ſea became dry, forming the continents which we now inhabit; the ſummits of our higheſt mountains having been iſlands in the ancient ſea. As theſe new continents muſt immediately have become ſubject to a new ſet of operations, which have continued from that time, and the effects of which are therefore both viſible and meaſurable, he apprehends, that we have in theſe effects deciſive chronometers; and as many of them are independent of each other, and agree only in the epoch of their commencement, they afford a body of evidence of irreſiſtible force. Of the operations that preceded the deluge according to this celebrated naturaliſt, the following is a ſhort abſtract. He agrees with his cotemporaries, MM. de la Metherie, de Sauſſure, Dolomieu, Pini, &c. that all the ſubſtances that form the maſs of our continents, the baſon of the ſea, &c. including *granite*, muſt at ſome diſtant

diſtant epocha have been ſuſpended in a liquid which covered the globe, whence they were at ſucceſſive periods *chemically* precipitated. But he is ſingular in his opinion of the firſt determining cauſe or indiſpenſable preliminary of ſuch precipitations: he refers it, as I have ſtated in my Diſcourſe, to the introduction of light among the other elements, which by inducing, according to its now known phyſical properties, *liquidity*, gave room for the electrive attractions, and all other phyſico-mechanical operations. He thinks our continents were built up ſtratum upon ſtratum, at the bottom of the ſea; then reduced to ruins, and now elevated above the preſent ſea, by the ſinking of former continents; the epoch of which event he judges, from very extenſive obſervations, not to be more remote than the deluge. Coal *ſtrata*, remains of terreſtrial animals, bones of quadrupeds, and impreſſions of freſh-water fiſh, he thinks belonged to the iſlands of the primitive world, which ſunk, and above which the ſea afterwards produced freſh ſtrata or beds, before its retreat at the deluge. Of the accompanying changes of the atmoſphere and of climates, I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak elſewhere.

This is the ſummary of M. de Luc's theory, as far as it applies generally to the ſubject of this diſcourſe. M. de Luc is too well known as an obſerver, and as a very curious experimentaliſt, to make it neceſſary to ſtate, that he has been particularly careful and induſtrious to collect facts to ſubſtantiate his theory; many of which are certainly exceedingly curious and important. See his *Hiſtory of the Earth and of Man*, addreſſed to her Majeſty, his *Letters to M. de la Metherie* in the *Journal de Phyſique*, and his *Geological Letters* in the 2d and following vols. of the *Britiſh Critic*.

I have thought it right to give this ſtatement of M. de Luc's principles at length, becauſe he has very recently had occaſion to recal the attention of the public to his arguments upon this head; and as the whole that relates to the age of *our* continents, according to this theory, depends upon *obſervation*, it is but reaſonable that it ſhould be made known, not only to naturaliſts, but to theologians. Beſides, whatever becomes of the general queſtion, and how much ſoever it may

be oppoſed, I confeſs I find in this theory ſome general principles laid down, which ſeem highly credible, and of great importance: as firſt, in regard to the derivation of our *ſtrata* from *chemical* precipitations. Though the origin of *granite*, and conſequently its chemical precipitation from a liquid, is ſtill a matter of diſpute, and will perhaps for ever be ſo; yet that many of our *ſtrata* have been ſo precipitated, ſeems very probable from their contents. How ſhall we ever account otherwiſe for a ſucceſſion of *diſtinct* ſtrata? What can ever have determined the ſea to depoſit at one time only calcareous, at another only aluminous, at another only arenaceous matter? I cannot help agreeing with M. de Luc, that the change from one ſpecies of ſtratum to another indicates a change of cauſe; and therefore, that the maſs of our continents does *ſeem* to be the product of ſucceſſive operations during which the producing cauſes have undergone ſucceſſive changes. This is a thing very much overlooked, and for which no other theory, that I know of, has duly provided.

Now if ſuch has been the origin of our principal ſtrata, I ſhall venture to pronounce, that no argument in regard to *time* can be drawn from the effects of ſuch operations. And if it pleaſed God to form the globe by the intervention of phyſical cauſes, I know none ſo likely to have been employed, as fire, and chemical attractions; for however ſlow and gradual ſome of the changes in the body of the earth may have been ſince it became an habitable globe, yet when it *was to become ſuch* by the determination of God's pleaſure, it would be abſurd to ſuppoſe that its arrangement would be left to depend on any proceſſes, that might *unneceſſarily retard* the execution of ſuch a decree of the Almighty. Though time is really nothing to an infinite and eternal Being, and the courſe of things may ſerve to ſhew, that a gradual and progreſſive operation of cauſes and ſucceſſive production of effects, are quite conſiſtent with the providential government of the world; yet I cannot bring myſelf to believe, that this or any other planet was ſubjected to any *protracted* courſe of operations, when it was firſt ordained to become habitable. The ſix *days* of Moſes appear to me incomparably more philoſophical than Buffon's correſpondent epochs of nature: according

cording to which the earth was for 37,206 years not only uninhabitable, but abſolutely too hot to touch: then inhabited for many thouſand years by creatures capable of living in boiling water: in about 60,000 years, and not before, fitted to ſuſtain terreſtrial animals, when elephants and rhinoceroſes were for 15,000 years the lords of this lower creation: and man, for whom alone it now ſeems to have been created, could not enter till after a period of full 75,000 years: and in 93,000 years, or thereabouts, the race is to be frozen out of the world again; for as it began with being too hot to touch, it will then be too cold to inhabit. Such calculations are ſurely a burleſque upon philoſophy, and almoſt impious, as applied to God. The world may have been reduced to order, certainly, by ſome courſe of phyſico-mechanical operations; but if ſo, I think certainly by the quickeſt and moſt active poſſible. In his *Natural Hiſtory*, M. Buffon makes a reflection on the *Protogæa of Leibnitz*, which I cannot help thinking quite as applicable to his own epochs of nature. "The grand defect of this theory," ſays he, "is, that it is not applicable to the preſent ſtate of the "earth: it is the *paſt*, which it explains; and this paſt "is ſo far back, and has left ſo few remains, that we "may ſay what we pleaſe of it, and the probability "will be in proportion as a man has talents to eluci- "date what he aſſerts. Beſides, it offends againſt the "*unity* of *creation*; for if it was as he ſuppoſes, it muſt "neceſſarily be admitted, that ſhell-fiſh, and other in- "habitants of the ſea, exiſted long before man, and all "other terreſtrial animals. Now, independent of Holy "Writ, is it not reaſonable to think, that all animals and "vegetables are *nearly as ancient* as each other?" Now nothing could take place upon ſo great a ſcale ſo ſuddenly perhaps as chemical precipitations; nothing could be more active or penetrating than fire; either as the cauſe of liquidity, as a lifting force, or poſſibly for the purpoſes of conſolidation. To the fact of moſt of our mineral ſtrata having been formed by chemical precipitations, we have then the conſent of many eminent modern obſervers; and we find them agreeing in another principle, namely, that no ſuch precipitations take place now in the ſea, nor any operations, which bear the

the ſlighteſt analogy to thoſe productions of mineral ſubſtances in ſtrata, which took place formerly in our globe. Depoſitions the ſea ſtill makes; but is not ſubject to chemical precipitations. The *Huttonian* theory, it is well known, differs very much from this, not only in regard to the origin of the granitic and other mineral beds, but particularly in reſpect to ſuch an interrupted courſe of operations; its chiefeſt principle being, that *ſimilar ſtrata* are ſtill and for ever forming at the bottom of the ſea, and conſolidating there, by means of a central or ſubterraneous heat.

I ſhall not pretend to decide between theſe two theories: of the operation of cauſes, *which have long ſince ceaſed to operate*, we can certainly judge but very imperfectly; nor yet of what is paſſing *at the bottom of the ſea*; or of the effects of ſubterraneous heat; of which, notwithſtanding the great progreſs lately made in ſuch enquiries, it is certainly and confeſſedly very difficult to determine any thing certain. I ſhould incline however to think it much more probable, that the earth owes its firſt arrangement either to cauſes not now operating, or to an extraordinary, perhaps a miraculous modification of exiſting cauſes, the action of which ceaſed, or was ſuſpended, when the purpoſes were fulfilled, for which they were deſigned; ſuch as the formation and conſolidation of the ſeveral ſtrata; and, I ſhould be diſpoſed to think, even their elevation and diſlocation.

In volcanic countries, and in ſome ſeas, very violent and very extenſive effects have been known to have been produced ſuddenly, or within a very ſhort ſpace of time; but the *general features* of the globe remain much as they were: and if the Huttonian ſyſtem be true, I think it muſt ſtill be granted, that many natural operations are for the preſent at leaſt ſuſpended, and will be ſo, probably, while the earth continues habitable. Let the rivers of the globe convey what they will to the ſea, and volcanos eject what they will from the body of the earth, in a few places, we are ſenſible now of no effects correſpondent to thoſe which muſt have originally raiſed the Alps, and other granitic mountains; and enabled them, according to the Huttonian ſyſtem, to break through or ſeparate the general

maſs

maſs of ſuperincumbent ſtrata. I do not mean to deny, that they may have been elevated, as the Huttonian ſyſtem ſtates; but let their elevation have been owing to whatever natural cauſe theoriſts may chooſe to aſſign, I think the ſuſpenſion of the action of ſuch cauſes is proof enough of ſome eſpecial interpoſition on the part of Providence; and that the ſtate of the globe does in fact conceal from us many ſecrets, as well as to what is paſt, as to what is to come.

It is a favourite maxim, which philoſophers have adopted from Seneca, and Profeſſor Playfair makes it the motto to his *Illuſtrations of the Huttonian Theory*, "Nunc naturalem cauſam quærimus et aſſiduam, non "raram et fortuitam." But ſurely the lifting forces, which this theory ſuppoſes to have operated in the elevation and protruſion of the granitic maſſes, as well as the operations of fire neceſſary upon this ſyſtem to their production, muſt be accounted rather among the rare and fortuitous cauſes, to which this globe is ſubject; not leſs ſo at leaſt than the ſinkings and ſubſidings, and precipitations of M. de Luc's theory.

Theſe two theories may be conſidered as the extremes of modern geology, as far as the hiſtory of the earth may ſeem to be connected with the hiſtory of man. M. de Luc apprehends, that not only our preſent continents are of ſmall antiquity, not exceeding the æra of the deluge, (from which period they ſupply us with certain chronometers,) but that every phyſical operation on the globe may be traced back to the exact æra of the creation, according to Moſes. Dr. Hutton and his followers imagine the whole globe to be of immenſe and unfathomable antiquity; ſubject to periodical revolutions, which depend on cauſes that operate ſo ſlowly, as entirely to preclude all calculations upon the ſubject. With regard then to both theſe theories, I ſhall endeavour to fix upon ſuch parts as ſeem to me to be of moſt concern to the Theologian, and then leave every reader to judge for himſelf.

Both theories are in agreement as to the original formation of what are commonly called the ſtratified parts of the globe, at the bottom of the ſea; and of their ſubſequent fracture and diſlocation by cataſtrophes of great extent and inconceivable violence: for I ſee but

but little difference, in point of force and violence, between the ſudden ſinking of immenſe continents, and the protruſion of Alpine rocks, through an immenſe body of ſuperincumbent ſtrata; even though this ſhould not be very ſudden. If we can find our way back to *any ſuch revolution of the earth*, I think we need enquire no further; any ſuch revolution I conceive to be, if not phyſically miraculous, yet morally ſo; and to form a moſt important epoch in the hiſtory of man. Very many things concur to carry us back to ſuch a period; for whether the Moſaic deluge was univerſal or not, whether it is the ſame, of which traces are to be found, more or leſs disfigured, in every profane hiſtory or mythology, without exception, there can be no poſſible doubt, but that nearly at that very æra, or indeed exactly ſo, many things immediately connected with the *preſent population of the earth*, ſeem to have had their origin and commencement. M. de Luc's hypotheſis in regard to the *deluge* (not to aſcend higher at preſent) is, that at that time ancient continents ſunk, and that the preſent continental parts of the globe were ſuddenly abandoned by the ſea; and to uſe the expreſſion of another moſt eminent obſerver, (M. Dolomieu) delivered over to the dominion of man. Such a revolution muſt of courſe have ſubjected the raiſed *ſtrata*, as M. de Luc obſerves, to a courſe of freſh operations; ſuch as the growth and decay of vegetables, the action of rain, and froſts, and rivers, &c. and theſe are all proceſſes and operations, the products and effects of which, he contends, are capable of meaſurement. Such an antiquity aſſigned to our continents is certainly a very low one, comparatively with the extravagant calculations of many other theoriſts, the Huttonians in particular: and yet, ſo far from being ſingular in aſſigning ſuch a date to our continents, the obſervations of MM. Dolomieu and Sauſſure, whoſe names carry with them a moſt diſtinguiſhed authority, brought them certainly to the ſame concluſion, as to the low antiquity of the preſent continents. See the *Journal de Phyſique*, 1792, and the *Voyage dans les Alpes* of *M. Sauſſure*, §. 625.

M. Dolomieu's expreſſion is very ſtrong: "Je défendrai une vérité qui me paroît inconteſtable, et dont il

" il me ſemble voir la preuve dans toutes les pages de " l'hiſtoire, et dans celles où ſont conſignés les faits " de la nature—Que l'état de nos continens *n'eſt pas* " *ancien:* qu'il n'y a pas *long-temps* qu'ils ont été don- " nés—à l'empire de l'homme." Here then we have a reference to *facts*, which obſervation muſt be left to decide upon; and upon which I ſhall only offer theſe remarks; namely, that many caſes already adduced ſeem to carry very great force with them: ſee, as one reference only, *M. de Luc's Vth Geological Letter*, in the 4th vol. of the *Britiſh Critic*; while the Huttonian ſyſtem of a *gradual* detritus, ſufficient to account for not only the formation of all that is exiſting, but for the removal alſo of all that is miſſing of our ſtony ſtrata, appears, on many accounts, entirely inadmiſſible: for though we certainly cannot meaſure, or in any manner judge of, the quantity of materials, which in the lapſe of innumerable ages the rivers of the earth *may have* tranſmitted to the ſea; yet, as many rivers empty themſelves into *lakes*, and have been in other ways making depoſitions, which admit of meaſurement, we have, I think, undoubted facts to oppoſe to the ſuppoſition, that ſuch cauſes have been operating for an indefinite time.

I know all theſe points have been repeatedly canvaſſed and examined; but not by any means to the removal of all difficulties upon the ſubject. I think this particular circumſtance of lakes, which M. de Luc ſo much inſiſts on, is an invincible obſtacle in the way of the Huttonian ſyſtem; and Profeſſor Playfair is obliged himſelf, in this inſtance, to have recourſe to hypotheſis, to remove the difficulty, though contrary to his own principles. See his *Illuſtrations*, p. 365. At p. 403, he oppoſes to M. de Sauſſure's notion of a *débacle*, the circumſtances of the longitudinal valley on the eaſt of Mont Blanc; which, as he obſerves, has its opening in the middle: and he would infer, that it not only could not have been ſo formed by a *débacle*, but muſt have been produced by the running of the two ſtreams from the *Col de Segne* and *Col de Ferret*. But the ſtream from the *Col de Segne* paſſes through the *Lac de Combal*, which would ſurely not have exiſted till this time, had that

that ſtream been the vehicle of ſuch a detritus as muſt have been neceſſary to the formation of the valley.

As to the *circulation of habitable worlds*, by the means of continual decay and renovation, it *ſeems to imply*, (ſo uſeful and ſo beautiful is the preſent *variegated* face of nature,) that before the earth could ever have aſſumed a ſtate entirely ſuitable and deſirable for man's habitation, one perfect world at leaſt muſt have been deſtroyed and worn to pieces; or its inhabitants muſt have lived without the advantages of any looſe materials; and this for ages and for ages. Compare ſections 114. 116. 117. 126. of *Profeſſor Playfair's Illuſtrations*. I only ſay, that this *ſeems* to be a conſequence of the ſyſtem; *decay*, or *waſting*, being made the *firſt* proceſſes in the production of all our *ſtrata*.

It is ſurely better to ſuppoſe, that as many of the looſe materials of the globe, as well as many of the moſt indurated, ſeem of indiſpenſable utility to man; whatever phyſical operations may have taken place in the *firſt* production of either, were by the ſpecial providence of God accelerated, by ſome violent cataſtrophes, external or internal, or both combined; or by ſuch proceſſes as precipitation, (for even our ſands *have been* ſuſpected, and I think with reaſon, of being chemically produced; ſee both *De Luc* and *Sauſſure*; and our pebbles of having been formed originally in *nodules*, and not to be owing entirely to attrition;) ſee *Douglas on the Antiquity of the Earth*, 49. Upon the ſuſpenſion of ſuch operations, nature poſſibly began or reſumed her courſe of gradual and progreſſive changes, which, as long as it ſhall pleaſe God to continue without any general interruption, may ſerve, and ſurely muſt ſerve, to ſupply ſome chronometers connected with the hiſtory of man. That this globe of earth has continued exactly in its preſent ſituation and condition for ſuch a length of ages as may allow for the gradual wearing away of our deepeſt valleys, and tranſportation of the miſſing materials, I cannot bring myſelf to conceive; but ſhould much rather agree to any ſyſtem, which, by the ſudden ſinking and ſubmerſion of former continents, or violent elevation of pre-exiſting ſtrata, or by *débacles*, which M. de Sauſſure has recourſe to, may

may allow us to ſuppoſe, that the *preſent diverſified* ſtate of the globe is coeval with the preſent race of man. Revolutions, that ſeem to extend to the very foundations of the earth, (and the viſible condition of the globe ſeems only referable to *ſuch*,) whether our valleys have been ſuddenly depreſſed by ſinkings, or our mountains raiſed by extraordinary lifting forces; whether water ſhall have undermined the pillars of the earth, and let the ſtrata drop; or ſubterraneous fires, and elaſtic fluids, driven up from below all the granitic and porphyritic matters, which form our higheſt ridges; ſuch events could ſcarcely have been unaccompanied with great changes in the condition of the *inhabitants* of the earth: and the only queſtion will be, whether ſuch revolutions may have had any moral ends; which thoſe who believe God to be the moral governor of the world will not heſitate to admit, and thoſe who do not believe ſo cannot contradict. Of one *ſuch* revolution the Moſaic writings give a ſuccinct account; and perhaps of more than one; for what may have been the phyſical effects of the *curſe of the earth*, we know not: but while the face of the globe bears teſtimony to violent and great cataſtrophes, and every human theory has recourſe to them; cataſtrophes in which the ſea ſeems undoubtedly to have changed its bed, either by depreſſion or elevation, and by which of courſe the inhabitants of the earth muſt have been univerſally or partially overwhelmed; to find, in the oldeſt book extant, an account of ſuch a revolution, in which the very foundations of the earth *were* ſhaken, and "all "the fountains of the great deep broken up," is certainly a very extraordinary circumſtance, and one, which, inſtead of ſtanding in the way of theoriſts, they ſeem particularly to want. For though ſome may be diſpoſed to think the globe is in ruins, yet they are *habitable* ruins; and no doubt ſuch *cataſtrophes* enter as much into the deſign of God's providence, as the moſt regular, ſlow, and gradual operations. Let the philoſopher then continue to inveſtigate his "cauſas natura-"les et aſſiduas," the common and viſible courſe of nature; but let him not pretend to exclude the more rare cataſtrophes and revolutions, which not only have been recorded, but which the hiſtory of man and the face

face of the globe ſeem evidently to confirm. I muſt not ſay that Profeſſor Playfair excludes them, for he expreſsly avows the contrary; but in the length of time, which he allows for the gradual excavation of our valleys, and reduction of our mountains, he certainly aſcends far beyond the æra of the deluge, which we conceive to have been unqueſtionably one of thoſe general cataſtrophes and revolutions, the æra of which is aſſignable. We may miſtake for ever in our enquiries into the ſpecific cauſes of the ſubmerſion of our continents; but that what *is dry land* was once ſea we cannot doubt; and the hiſtory and chronology of the world ſeem to carry us pretty regularly back to the very æra of the Moſaic deluge.

What was the phyſical ſtate of the globe preceding this muſt be mere matter of conjecture; though I have already ſaid, that the notion of chemical precipitations from a liquid ſeems almoſt neceſſary to account for the ſucceſſion of diſtinct ſtrata; and a fluid ſtate of the globe, at leaſt ſuperficially, ſeems not only to be conſiſtent with the Scriptures, and to be demonſtrable from the figure of the earth, but to be a point, in which philoſophers, ancient and modern, have been always more agreed than in any thing elſe; the Huttonians being almoſt ſingular, if not entirely ſo, in their denial of it. Whether liquidity was introduced, as M. de Luc has ſuppoſed, I preſume not to judge; but I am very certain, that his notion is not more conjectural than many that have met with a much better reception in the world. Nor is it altogether original; Wallerius having expreſsly attributed to the introduction of *light* the firſt fluidity of the chaos, and the commencement of the attractive influences. See his *Origine du Monde*, paragraph. xiv. xvi. xvii. Nor is the opinion of Leibnitz far different; "Calor autem motuſve inteſtinus ab "igne eſt, ſeu *luce*, id eſt, *tenuiſſimo ſpiritu permeante:* "atque ita ad motricem cauſam perventum eſt, unde "ſacra quoque hiſtoria *coſmogeniæ initium* capit Proto-"gæa." §§. ii. iii. iv. Profeſſor Playfair might have known, that the title of M. de Luc's tenth Letter to M. La Metherie, as well as the reaſonings in it, were no ſuch *novelties* as he ſeems to think them. See his *Illuſtrations*, p. 479. Still I think all theſe ſpeculations

tions are *too* conjectural to found any ſolid argument on. Moſes does not tell us what ſpecific phyſical effects the firſt introduction of light wrought upon the chaos, except that, as before the earth was "without "form and void," and "darkneſs on the face of the "deep," this was the *firſt* ſtep towards its change: and philoſophers may ſpeculate upon it as they pleaſe; it is enough to know they cannot diſprove it. Mr. Kirwan makes it the ſource of all the *volcanic* operations that have taken place: other theoriſts have aſſigned to it different offices; but very many agree in conceiving it to have been either the cauſe or immediate conſequence of the firſt *commotions* that took place in the chaotic maſs; and this long before its chemical or phyſical properties were at all underſtood. Beſides thoſe theories whoſe authors are well known, I have many others now lying before me, which it is quite unneceſſary to cite: but there is not one of them, which does not pretend to explain matters, with the fulleſt confidence, that whether light was the firſt cauſe or the firſt conſequence of motion in the chaos, it could not have been otherwiſe than according to the exact terms of their reſpective ſyſtems. M. de Luc and Wallerius, though they make it the firſt phyſical cauſe of fluidity or liquidity, very properly refer its production to the immediate act of God; and thus we are brought back to a MIRACLE, where, if not before, all enquiries ſhould certainly terminate.

Page 280. *note* (3).

And till this is aſcertained to a certainty—all our ſpeculations concerning paſt tranſactions muſt be in the greateſt degree vague and hypothetical.] It has been generally thought, that the great attention which has lately been paid to experimental philoſophy in all its branches, and particularly to chemiſtry, muſt enable us in time to account for many geological phenomena, which have hitherto been inexplicable; and that we are every day making advances towards a more correct knowledge of the ſtructure of the globe, and the nature of the cauſes that *have* operated in the production of both the ſtratified and unſtratified parts of the earth. It is undeniable, that many very important diſcoveries have already

been made, and that many more may reaſonably be expected to follow, from the peculiar attention paid to chemiſtry; but whatever help we may receive from it, in judging of the preſent operation of natural cauſes, or in prognoſticating future effects, I think it ſcarcely allows us to be very confident, as to any ſatisfactory ſolution of *paſt* operations. The very knowledge we have obtained of many ſubſtances hitherto entirely miſunderſtood, and whoſe properties were formerly altogether *miſtaken*, ſhould certainly make us extremely cautious, not only of forming theories, but even of pronouncing any thing to be capable of being reduced to a certainty, concerning the action of any phyſical cauſes in time paſt.

I have in the preceding note alluded to the opinion of many modern philoſophers, that moſt of our ſtrata owe their origin to chemical precipitations: to mechanical precipitations from a liquid they muſt at leaſt be referred; but this ſeems ſcarcely ſufficient in any manner to account for the order and *diſtinction* of the ſeveral ſtrata; they would ſurely in all inſtances be more mixed and confounded one with the other. And yet not only are they now found to be clearly ſeparable into ſtrata of diſtinct ſubſtances and materials; but often the animal and vegetable reliquiæ, imbedded in the ſeveral ſtrata, are found to be of diſtinct ſpecies, and to vary conſiderably. This led M. de Luc to conceive, that whatever had been the determining cauſe of ſuch precipitations, it had not only affected the menſtruum at the moment, but ſo changed its nature, and the nature alſo of the ſuperincumbent atmoſphere, as to have had an effect on animal life. And he thought he had diſcovered ſuch cauſes, in the periodical developement and evolution of different elaſtic fluids, from the bottom of the primitive ocean. It is not my buſineſs to verify this or any other hypotheſis; but only to ſuppoſe it poſſible, in order to ſhew how little we muſt know of ſuch operations, when every experiment in chemiſtry tends to prove, that the whole ſyſtem of chemical ſolutions and precipitations muſt depend on ſuch curious affinities, and ſuch an infinite variety of poſſible combinations of ſubſtances, as to elude all our enquiries. And if chemical precipitations are rejected, and the aqueous origin

origin of things ſet aſide, can we promiſe ourſelves more certainty from the adoption of the Vulcanic ſyſtem? Can we pretend to decide more clearly any thing concerning the *poſſible* action and effects of fire in time paſt? I think not. I really apprehend, that to judge fairly of the matter, the determination of the ſpecific cauſes, that may have operated in time paſt in the body of the earth, may be ſaid to become every day more difficult, from the very diſcovery of the many different ways, in which the action of all phyſical cauſes whatſoever may be modified and affected. For to refer at once both to the Neptunian and Vulcanic theories, what can we be ſaid to know, or what are we ever likely to know, for *certain*, concerning the power of water to become an univerſal ſolvent, in particular circumſtances, or of the action and effects of fire, under different circumſtances of compreſſion?

It is ſurely very juſtifiably ſaid by Mr. Kirwan, *Iriſh Tranſ.* vol. v. "that water, in certain circumſtances, "and with the addition of certain ſubſtances, may be "admitted as an univerſal ſolvent, ſhould not be de"nied, merely on account of our ignorance of thoſe "circumſtances and auxiliary ſubſtances." And the whole of the Huttonian theory may certainly be ſaid to depend on the effects of fire operating under circumſtances, which we have now no means of aſcertaining. Leibnitz depended for *his* ſyſtem on ſome *unknown* action of fire. "Is enim noſtrorum furnorum efficaciam "immenſo gradus durationiſque exceſſu ſuperans, quid "mirum eſt, ſi tunc produxit, quæ nunc homines imi"tari non poſſunt?" And in another place, in a very animated ſtyle, "Unde prona ſuſpicio eſt, quod exiguis "ſpeciminibus nos ludimus, naturam magnis operibus "executam; cui Montes ſunt pro alembicis, Vulcani "pro furnis." *Protogæa*, §§. iii. x.

I do not mean to deny, that we may every day approach nearer to the diſcovery of the properties both of fire and water, and of the circumſtances by which they may be ſeverally modified and affected; but yet no diſcoveries can ever aſſure us of the exact circumſtances, by which they may *have been* modified and affected in time paſt. We may learn generally the effects of preſſure on *fire*, or by what circumſtances the

ſoluble properties of *water* may be increaſed or diminiſhed: but all theſe accidents and modifications muſt ſtill have been always ſubject to every poſſible variation of degree and intenſity, ſo as not to admit of any calculations ſo ſure, as to found any ſolid argument upon them. I believe both fire and water have been the chief agents in the ſeveral revolutions that have affected thoſe parts of the globe, which we have it in our power to examine; but to what extent, or under what preciſe circumſtances, I neither think it poſſible to determine, nor do I ſee any great uſe in determining it, if we could. We are pretty generally agreed WHO made the world; *why* it was made we cannot doubt; *how* it was made can never be a matter of any eſſential concern to man, when ſo many millions of the human race paſs their lives, and fulfil the ends of their creation, without a thought upon the ſubject, beyond what they conceive to have been revealed to them in the ſhort account of the great Jewiſh Legiſlator; and therefore Calvin deduced an argument for the divinity of the Pentateuch from the very omiſſion of all ſuch philoſophical ſubtilties. "Artes reconditas aliunde diſcat, qui volet. Hic "Spiritus Dei *omnes ſimul ſine exceptione docere voluit.*" In *Gen.* 1.

As far as an examination into the viſible products either of fire or water may enable us to apply theſe chemical agents with more certainty and more effect, in our laboratories, and in artificial proceſſes of manifeſt utility, its importance muſt be evident and undeniable: but then this ſhould always be the acknowledged object of ſuch enquiries; for though we may find many different ways of converting to our uſe the exiſting materials of the globe, it can only be by combining and modifying what does exiſt: we can never form a new material, or multiply what is already provided for us; and yet it would appear, that nothing leſs could ſerve to *prove* any theory; ſynthesis being generally the only certain proof of a perfect analyſis.

We may repeat even in this age, ſo much and ſo juſtly extolled for its advancement in knowledge, what was admirably ſaid long ago upon the ſubject of *Syſtematic Phyſics*, by the entertaining author of the *Spectacle de la Nature:* "An experience of ſix thouſand years "is

" is fully sufficient to inform us of what is accessible or " interdicted to us. So long as man, in his researches, " has busied himself about what *is* submitted to his " government, his efforts were always rewarded with " new discoveries: but so long as he presumed to dive " into the intimate structure of the several parts of the " universe, which he is not appointed to put in motion, " his ideas were never any thing but an odd medley of " fancies and uncertainties. If he studies the measures " of quantities and the laws of motion, not indeed to " fathom the heavens, or to weigh in a balance the " masses of the celestial bodies, but to know the order " of his days; if he observes the relations, which the " aspects of the heaven have with regard to his habita- " tion, and the progress of the light through the me- " diums, which he offers thereto; the helps which he " may find from the equilibrium of liquors, or from " the weight and celerity of the bodies he is master of, " or from all the other experiments that fall under his " eye, and especially under his hand; in short, if he " applies experiments to the necessaries of life, this will " be a system of physics full of certainty, and produc- " tive of great advantages." See the VIIIth Dialogue of the *Spectacle de la Nature*; where, allowance being made for the language of the times in which it was written, much that is very sensible and very applicable to the subject before us may be found. I cannot forbear transcribing the concluding sentence: (I copy from the English edition of 1739:) " Our reason always em- " ploys itself with success, when it strives to render ex- " perimental truths useful to us; when it prudently " makes use of God's favours, and praises him for the " same: this is the whole sum of man's knowledge."

So much would not be said upon this subject, but that it is, and ever will be, perhaps, the custom of the world, to compare all philosophical theories of the earth with the Mosaic cosmogony; from which two evils seem to have arisen. Those theories, which have been framed without any regard to the revealed account of things, have been thought to imply a philosophical contempt of the sacred writings, as inconsistent with the visible state of things; while many theories, which have been severally invented to confirm every

article of the Bible cosmogony, having been found to be inadmissible and notoriously unphilosophical, have made people suspicious of all such explanations of matters, to such a degree, as to make them apprehend that the Bible contains nothing of real fact as to the first origin of things: whereas I shall make no scruple of declaring, that if I saw any *necessity* for believing the several articles of the Scripture cosmogony, to the extent that some very eminent divines and philosophers have judged it to be necessary, I should not hesitate to reject all philosophical hypotheses, that have recourse to time indefinite, or to any production of minerals, which they are not able to imitate, and confirm synthetically. But my ideas of the subject do not require this; and that I may not be suspected of *evading* any system that seems to affect the chronology or cosmogony of the Bible, I shall in few words state what my own sentiments are upon the subject. First, then, I am persuaded, that the earth exhibits sufficient proofs of *violent* revolutions and catastrophes; and though none such can be supposed to happen without the especial regard of God, and consequently for purposes of the most awful importance, yet I do conceive that there may be in nature forces sufficient for the production of such effects, without any other miracle than the determination of God's providence, to place things in such circumstances as to produce such violent and unusual phenomena. I believe in some such revolutions all the strata of the earth have been fractured and dislocated; and that the sea has covered our continents, once certainly, but perhaps many times; and I conceive the Mosaic deluge to have been indisputably one such catastrophe, and to be confirmed by many very extraordinary circumstances in the history and appearances of the earth, and of the present race of mankind. I do not regard the marine productions, which are found much below the superficies of the globe, to be proofs of the Mosaic universal deluge, otherwise than as they clearly evince not merely the possibility, but actuality of such a catastrophe as a general depression or elevation of the waters of the sea: and as *Moses could not* attain to the knowledge of any such event as the universal submersion of the continental parts of the globe, (supposing such to have taken

taken place,) otherwiſe than by tradition or revelation, I conceive we have an indiſputable proof either that the event was authentically tranſmitted, or miraculouſly revealed to him. I am not certain, nor do I heſitate to acknowledge it, but that what is commonly called the Moſaic coſmogony might be the æra of ſuch another revolution; when, after a new arrangement of things, Adam and Eve were truly introduced into the world as he deſcribes, as the Protoplaſts of the very race to which we belong. I do not pretend to ſay, this was not actually the very æra of the very *firſt creation* of our planet and our ſyſtem; much leſs would I pretend to decide, that there has not been *time* ſufficient ſince, for the production and ordering of all our mineral ſubſtances, by the operation of known phyſical cauſes: for I contend that there is now no knowing how the operation of ſuch cauſes may have been in time paſt *retarded* or *accelerated*. But I think it poſſible, without any impeachment of the veracity of the author of the Pentateuch, that this globe and our whole ſyſtem may be much older than the race of Adam; nor would my faith in the Bible be in the ſmalleſt degree ſhaken, by any philoſophical proof that could be brought of antecedent revolutions in the body of the earth, let them aſcend as high as any theoriſts require, ſhort of infinity. This is not ſaid by way of evaſion. I publiſhed the ſame opinion four years ago, before the *Huttonian* theory, which has been thought ſo adverſe to the account in the ſacred records, had been openly vindicated by ſo eminent an advocate as Profeſſor Playfair. I ſhall beg leave to refer to my book, entitled Εἷς Θεὸς Εἷς Μεσίτης, from p. 75. to p. 129; where I have fully expreſſed my ſentiments concerning the creation and hiſtory of man: and I make this reference the more particularly, becauſe I find the Huttonian theory excuſed by the learned Profeſſor, upon grounds entirely conformable to the notions I have there avowed.

It is but a piece of juſtice due to Dr. Hutton and his learned advocate, to extract the paſſage. "On what "is now ſaid is grounded another objection to Dr. "Hutton's theory, namely, that the high antiquity "aſcribed by it to the earth is inconſiſtent with that

" ſyſtem of chronology which reſts on the authority " of the ſacred writings. This objection would, no " doubt, be of weight, if the high antiquity in queſ- " tion were not reſtricted merely to the *globe of the* " *earth*, but were alſo extended to the human race: " that the origin of *mankind* does not go back beyond " ſix or ſeven thouſand years, is a poſition ſo involved " in the narrative of the Moſaic books, that any thing " inconſiſtent with it, would no doubt ſtand in oppoſi- " tion to the teſtimony of thoſe ancient records. On " this ſubject, however, geology is ſilent; and the hiſ- " tory of arts and ſciences, when traced as high as any " authentic monuments extend, refers the beginnings " of civilization to a date not very different from that " which has juſt been mentioned. On the other hand, " the authority of the ſacred books ſeems to be but " little intereſted in what regards the mere antiquity " of the earth itſelf; nor does it appear that their lan- " guage is to be underſtood literally concerning the *age* " of that body, any more than concerning its *figure* or " its *motion*. It is but reaſonable that we ſhould extend " to the geologiſt the ſame liberty of ſpeculation, " which the aſtronomer and mathematician are already " in poſſeſſion of; and this may be done, by ſuppoſing " that the chronology of Moſes relates only to the hu- " man race." See *Playfair's Illuſtrations of the Huttonian Theory*, §. 125. This is the vindication which the learned Profeſſor oppoſes to the charge alluded to; and though I am not prepared to ſubſcribe generally to the ſyſtem he defends, I cannot but agree with him in believing that the *chronology* of Moſes relates chiefly, if not excluſively, to the *human race*. Profeſſor Robinſon ſeems to be of the ſame opinion, in his *Proofs of a Conſpiracy*; where ſpeaking of Voltaire's confidence in the phenomena of the earth being in contradiction to the Moſaic writings, and the ſeveral diſputes upon this ſubject, he ſays, " For my own part, I think the affair is " of little conſequence; Moſes writes the hiſtory, not " of this globe, but of the race of Adam." *Poſtſcript*, p. 544. 3d edit. As to the particular epochas of the *revolutions* of our globe, I fully conceive, that two at leaſt are aſcertainable, viz. the firſt previous to the introduction

troduction of the Protoplaſts, if that was not the original creation of this planet; and the ſecond the deluge of Noah.

I know that many divines, and many philoſophers, have thought it not allowable to refer the æra of the creation of our globe to any period beyond that ſuppoſed to be fixed by the introduction of the race of Adam; and ſome have imagined it to be wrong, not to include in this account even the whole of the viſible univerſe; (ſee *Jamieſon on the Uſe of ſacred Hiſtory*, vol. i. 163.) I know that Origen imputes to Celſus, who profeſſed to believe that the world had been ſubject to *many* revolutions, a deſign to have it believed that the world was not created, lib. i. p. 16. *edit. Cantab.* But I muſt agree with Profeſſor Playfair, that there is a great difference between doubting of the preciſe æra of the beginning or end of the world, and aſſerting, that it had no beginning, and will have no end. But to prove, that the idea of a pre-exiſtent ſtate of the earth, is no *new* invention to meet the objections of *modern* theoriſts, or evade their calculations, I might refer to a work publiſhed by a M. Engel, in which he conceives that the *angels* inhabited the earth *before man*; an opinion which even M. de Luc ſeems inclined to countenance; ſee his *Lettres ſur la Terre et l'Homme*. And our celebrated chronologiſt, Mr. Jackſon, explains the paſſage of the earth being "without "form and void," Gen. i. of its being for the time void of *inhabitants:* and he further ſuppoſes it poſſible, that the chaotic ſtate of the earth might not be its firſt creation, but the diſſolution of a former ſtate, whoſe period was determined, in order to a new formation of a different ſyſtem. And *he* likewiſe thinks, the *angels* might have been the inhabitants of the *pre-exiſtent orb*. See his *Chronological Antiquities*, vol. i.

Whether this was ſo or not we ſhall undoubtedly never know, unleſs God is pleaſed to reveal it to us; which we may not expect *here*, and hereafter it may be no ſuch ſubject of curioſity. I do not think philoſophers have hitherto by any means *proved*, that the firſt creation of the globe muſt *unqueſtionably be referred* to a period more remote than the origin of the preſent race of mankind: and if they ever ſhould prove it, I certainly think

think the Bible does by no means contradict the poſſibility of ſuch a ſyſtem of things. "Immo licet me "non lateat," ſays a ſenſible writer, "eſſe pios pa- "riter et eruditos viros, qui ſacrum hiſtoricum mundi "creationem non tam φυσικῶς quam ἠθικῶς deſcripſiſſe "exiſtimant; ego tamen verbis ejus unice inhæreo, et, "ſi *modum creationis* percontari pergas, ingenue fateor, "nihil me habere, quod tibi reponam, niſi illud effa- "tum divi Pauli, Πίστει νοοῦμεν κατηρτίσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας ῥήματι "Θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐκφαινομένων τὰ βλεπόμενα γεγονέναι." Heb. xi. ver. 3. "Otioſa enim eſt apud antiquos quoſdam "Eccleſiæ Patres diſputatio, annon mundi hujus partes "et regiones ſuperiores, ac ille præcipue, quem angeli "inhabitant, beatiſſimus mundus orbi noſtro per ignota "multa ſæcula præextiterit? Otioſa etiam Carteſiana "hypotheſis, quaſi paratus jam et omnibus vitæ com- "modis inſtructus orbis, in aere per multa ſæcula flui- "taverit ante, quam Adam, primus ejus incola, a *Deo* "ad illum habitandum conderetur. Ecquid, quæſo, ſi "hæc omnia cognita penitus atque exploratiſſima ha- "beremus, meliores inde reddi poſſemus? Sed in illo, "quem Moſes nobis in ſua coſmopœio inſinuat, con- "ceptu, quod *Deus univerſum hoc ex nihilo condiderit*, ni- "hil otioſi latitat. Potius hic omnia ad pietatem, omnia "ad religionem conſpirant. Quantam enim divinæ po- "tentiæ admirationem conceptus hic in animis noſtris "excitare debet? Quantum timorem erga potentiſſi- "mum *Numen* nobis inſpirare? quantum fiduciam noſ- "tram in DEUM acuere? et profecto, idea, quod DEUS "vaſtum hunc terrarum orbem *ex nihilo* produxerit, "quod *voluntas* ejus, quæ, ut ita dicam, *unico verbo* FIAT "*declarata* fuit, tot innumeris, ut philoſophi loquun- "tur, *modificationibus*, et partium, quibus componitur, "diſpoſitionibus non *poſſibilitatem* tantum ſed *exiſten- "tiam* dederit, longe major eſt, quam ut humanus in- "tellectus pro dignitate illam aſſequi valeat." Vid. *Præfationem Chriſt. Ludovic. Scheidii ad Protogæam celeberrimi Leibnitii.*

Page 280. *note* (4).

The rapid progreſs lately made—in mineralogy and chemiſtry has led many to ſuppoſe, that the times are peculiarly favourable for ſuch enquiries and ſpeculations.] Profeſſor Playfair

Playfair concludes his Illuſtrations of the Huttonian Theory with a note expreſsly on "*the Prejudices relating "to the Theory of the Earth*," at the ſame time endeavouring to ſhew, "that the maſs of geological know-"ledge is now in that ſtate of fermentation, from "which the true theory may be expected to emerge." P. 516. If this is really the caſe, I wiſh all theoriſts may, as the learned Profeſſor himſelf directs, keep to their object, and not attempt to *explain the firſt origin of things*. See p. 511.

I have ſaid ſo much in the preceding notes upon the invincible obſtacles, which ſeem to ſtand in our way in enquiring into the nature of the phyſical operations that have taken place in time paſt in the body of the earth, that for fear I ſhould be thought to have any unreaſonable prejudice againſt geological ſpeculations in general, or to depreciate the manifold and important diſcoveries of the age we live in, I ſhall beg leave to ſtate, that my only object is to ſecure that reſpect to the Bible, which I think philoſophy can never be able to ſhake.—Though the Moſaic coſmogony, and hiſtory of the firſt ages, is ſimple, and free from all phyſical explications of things; yet ſome few points are touched upon, which if philoſophy ſhall not approve, it may not be admitted, I think, to contradict: as for inſtance, Gen. i. 9. is I think ſufficient authority for us to believe that unqueſtionably ſuch was once the condition of this globe, that its ſuperficial parts at leaſt were in a ſtate of fluidity; and as all our obſervations tend to ſhew, that our ſtrata were formed under the water, my faith in this point would never be ſhaken by any philoſophical calculations to prove the contrary: for though it ſhould be ſhewn ever ſo clearly that, according to our preſent knowledge of the ſolubility of mineral ſubſtances, it muſt have required to hold in ſolution the ſpheroidal ſhell of the earth, 625 times its bulk of water; (ſee Playfair, 493;) yet I ſhould conclude, that, by ſome circumſtances or other unknown to us, the mineral bodies of the globe were then rendered ſoluble in proportions different from thoſe which our experiments diſcover to us. And, I think, our moſt recent diſcoveries in this line would particularly authoriſe ſuch a ſuppoſition. To take two inſtances from the Hutto-

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nian theory. To account for the exiſtence of Kilkenny coal, of all others the moſt deſtitute of bitumen, this theory ſuppoſes it to have been fuſed with an entire abſence of preſſure: whereas to account for pyrites, the ſame ſyſtem ſuppoſes them to have been formed by fuſion under a ſtrong preſſure, by which its ſulphur, a ſubſtance at leaſt as volatile as bitumen, is kept in combination with the iron. Now theſe ſubſtances have been found in conjunction. The inference is plain. Again, an objection has been made to the igneous origin of granite, from the circumſtance of the cryſtals of quartz and feldſpar mutually impreſſing each other: whereas our experiments formerly taught us to believe that theſe two minerals were fuſible at very different temperatures: it has ſince however been diſcovered, that the caſe is otherwiſe, when they are reduced to powder; by which ſmall change of circumſtances, the feldſpar is made to act as a flux on the quartz. This point has been aſcertained by Sir James Hall's experiments, and I think by M. d'Arcet alſo; ſee his *Mémoire ſur l'Action d'un Feu égal, &c.* p. 1. §. 49. referred to by *M. de Sauſſure, Voyage dans les Alpes*, vol. i. 166. I think therefore, even if we had not the authority of ſo great a naturaliſt as Mr. Kirwan for ſuch a concluſion, we might reaſonably inſiſt upon the ſuppoſition, which I have expreſſed in Mr. Kirwan's own words, in the Sermon; namely, that the chaos, whenever, or how often ſoever, it may have exiſted, may have been at the time "a more complex menſtruum than any that has ſince "been known." *Iriſh. Phil. Tranſ.* vol. vi. Profeſſor Playfair himſelf acknowledges that one of the moſt important principles involved in Dr. Hutton's theory was till lately, not only unknown, but could not be diſcovered; namely, the detention of the aerial fluid in limeſtone expoſed to the action of fire, under circumſtances of great compreſſion. Now let us only ſuppoſe this diſcovery never had been made, what falſe hypotheſes might have been framed as to the operations of nature in time paſt! Red porphyry, M. le Comte de Buffon tell us, is compoſed of an infinite number of *prickles of the ſpecies of echinus, or ſea-cheſnut.* They are placed pretty near each other, and form all the ſmall white ſpots which are in porphyry. Who would not upon

upon ſuch authority have determined porphyry to have been of aqueous origin, and to have contained marine reliquiæ? M. de Sauſſure thought he had clearly diſcovered the whole hiſtory of ſubterraneous fires, when the Canon Ricupero aſſured him, that Ætna had thrown out abundance of pyrites: he was undeceived when he diſcovered them to be only cryſtals of ſchorl. But the worthy Canon himſelf would not be convinced of the miſtake; and thus the *paſt* operations of nature became liable to ſuch miſrepreſentations, as obliged the able naturaliſt, to whom we owe the fact, to record it, though at the hazard of expoſing a very worthy man and very zealous obſerver.

Now though all our late diſcoveries and experiments undoubtedly tend to ſecure us more and more from errors of this nature, and therefore geology may be ſaid to be greatly advanced; yet certainly before Philoſophy may be allowed to contradict Revelation, we have a right to inſiſt upon ſuch a correct and preciſe knowledge not only of the probable, but of the *poſſible* circumſtances, under which nature may have acted in time paſt, as no progreſs in human knowledge can afford us an expectation of; while the diſcoveries we make daily in chemiſtry, of the infinite ways in which the combined actions of different ſubſtances may be modified, ſhould ſerve to convince us, that after all the reſearches we can poſſibly make into the primitive, or even into any remote ſtate of the globe, our concluſions may be fallacious; for cauſes may have operated then, which operate no longer, or under circumſtances which may never again occur. Now among other things, the time or period of ſuch operations muſt be for ever uncertain; for we know, more than ever we knew before, that every operation depending on the action of fire, on the ſolution of ſubſtances, and above all on the developement of elaſtic fluids, may have been accelerated or retarded, increaſed or diminiſhed, by ſuch a variety of accidents, as is paſt all calculation; and therefore I think we may agree with M. de Luc, that "*time* may "never be ſubſtituted for *cauſes*;" and that we had better not have recourſe to *time indefinite* to account for any geological phenomena, till we are able to point out ſome ſpecific and determinate effects that have been

been produced within a given ſpace of time.—There are many very important points which remain to be aſcertained, and which are particularly ſtill in diſpute between the Vulcaniſts and Neptuniſts; ſuch as the diminution of the general quantity of the aqueous fluid, from the decompoſition of water, and other cauſes; a fact pretty generally admitted; and which perhaps the diſcovery of the formation of water from the combuſtion of the inflammable and vital airs, may render more uncertain than ever. The different effects of quick or ſlow refrigeration of fuſed matters, is a point not aſcertainable, or ſeems to be ſo. The non-exiſtence of air in lavas, and its exiſtence in almoſt all, if not every foſſil, preſents many difficulties, as well as the circumſtance already noticed, of the evolution or detention of volatile matters under different circumſtances of preſſure. Theſe notions of the difficulty of judging of paſt operations are not taken up by way of *evaſion*, any more than other obſervations I have ventured to make: I find it to be the opinion of *others*, and to have been advanced where there was no queſtion of theology to interfere. The author of the Comparative View of the Huttonian and Neptunian Syſtems, very juſtly, I think, remarks, " that when we conſider what he has been at " the pains to examine into, viz. the influence of ag- " gregation in preventing ſolution, the power of tem- " perature in promoting it, the incalculable effects " reſulting from the exertion of complicated affinities, " and the poſſibility of ſubſtances being compounds, " which our imperfect knowledge ranks as ſimple, we " can have no heſitation in admitting the concluſion " which each ſeparately eſtabliſhes, that foſſils *may* " *have been* formed by water, though *apparently inſolu-* " *ble in that fluid.* And if an induction from facts ſhall " render probable their aqueous origin, their *preſent* " inſolubility will form no objection of real force." This is only advanced indeed in regard to one point in geology, namely, the ſolubility of quartz; but I think it applies to all. The Huttonians may think ſuch an argument a *geological* evaſion: but I am ſure it is no *theological* one; for, it muſt be remembered, much that Moſes relates is miraculous; that is, he ſpeaks of miraculous interpoſitions on the part of God, in the revo-

lutions

lutions that have befallen the globe; it is therefore no wonder that the phyſical *poſſibility* of them is not clearly to be ſeen; and as to the *probability* of their having been *miraculous*, the difficulties that for ever ſtand in the way of ſuch reſearches, and the endleſs diſputes they give riſe to, muſt ſurely be admitted to be no contemptible proofs of the very fact.

Page 283. *note* (5.)

Though no ſuch analyſis has been at all effectual to the enabling us in any one inſtance to produce ſuch ſubſtances, by any mixture of the aſſigned ingredients.] M. Dolomieu, in his paper "*Sur les Pierres compoſées et les Roches*," in the *Journal de Phyſique*, inſiſts upon it that we can have no knowledge of the ſpecific chemical operations which took place at the birth of our globe, it being impoſſible to *recompoſe any one ſtone after the moſt curious and nice analyſis*: and this certainly appears to be a fair concluſion to draw, as I have already intimated. The theory, of which I have given a ſketch in my Sermon, has for its author a M. C. Schmeider, and it was publiſhed at Leipzig in 1802, under the following title: "*Die Geognoſie nach Chemiſchen Grundzatzen*," i. e. Geognoſy (or Geology) explained on the principles of Chemiſtry. I only know it from ſome extracts which I have ſeen, and I would by no means refer to it upon ſo partial and imperfect a knowledge of it, if my purpoſe was only to expoſe it; but being founded on the celebrated ſcheme of Buffon, viz. that of deriving our planetary ſyſtem from the ſhock of a comet upon the body of the ſun, I have the more particularly referred to it, becauſe this very ſuppoſition ſeems to be as ſtrong an inſtance of the groſs miſtakes we are liable to fall into, by ſtepping an inch beyond what facts will bear us out in, as any circumſtance whatſoever. Dr. Herſchel's papers in the Philoſophical Tranſactions, on the ſun's heat, muſt be now pretty generally known: but, independent of theſe, the nature of the ſun has been much too long a matter of *doubt* to juſtify any perſons aſſuming its ignition, as a foundation for a *new* theory. I have already had occaſion to advert to this in my book on the Plurality of Worlds; ſee pp. 122—128; which I am ſorry to have occaſion to refer to ſo often; but

but theſe notes being already much longer than I expected, I do not like to tranſcribe it, though it is particularly applicable to the ſubject we are upon: ſee alſo *Wallerius*, ſect. vii. and *Lambert's Syſtem of the World*, ch. iv. To ſhew however how eaſy it is to make a world, I ſhall give one ſpecimen here of M. Schmeider's method. After having determined with Buffon, that our globe was ſtruck from the ſun by a comet, he thus proceeds methodically to arrange matters. "*L'atmoſphere chaotique* de la *comete* coula autour du *globe métallique ardent*, et fut mêlée avec les exhalaiſons vaporeuſes: la ſolution des *alkalis* et des *terres* fut décomposée par l'*acide carbonique:* ceci dut donner bientôt une *coagulation* du fluide, dans laquelle les parties homogènes s'agrégèrent, et *le fluide expanſible* devint un *liquide:* par ce *liquide* le *noyau métallique* fut *éteint*, mais il ne ceſſa pas d'agir: il ceſſa de décompoſer l'*air* avec lequel il ne venoit plus en contact; mais il commença à décompoſer l'*eau* par ſa chaleur. Une *oxydation fermentante* fut produite, comme dans les ruines brûlantes des maiſons conſumées, et qu'on éteint par l'eau; l'odeur brûlante indique l'*oxydation*. De cette maniere, non-ſeulement l'*eau* a diminué, dans *le fluide chaotique*, mais il s'en eſt ſéparé encore plus d'*acide carbonique* et *méphitique* et de *principes aqueux*, &c. &c." I forbear to proceed, becauſe I am conſident it would be to no purpoſe. Lord Shafteſbury long ago prepared a rod for ſuch world-makers. "We have," ſays he, "a ſtrange fancy to be CREATORS.—Every ſect has a "recipe; when you know it, you are maſter of nature; you ſolve all her phenomena; you ſee all her "deſigns, and can account for all her operations; if "need were, you might perchance too be of her laboratory, and work for her: at leaſt one would imagine "the partizans of each modern ſect to have had this "conceit. They are all Archimedes's in their way, "and *make* a world upon eaſier terms than *he* offered "to *move* one." *Moraliſts*, Part I. ſect. 1. In regard to the theory we have juſt had occaſion to notice, M. de Luc has admirably obſerved, that we may in vain challenge M. Schmeider to produce ſtones by ſuch proceſſes as he has been at ſuch pains to deſcribe, becauſe, no doubt, he would always allege, that he had no

fragment

fragment of the ſun, or *tail of a comet*, to go to work with; and there could not be a better burleſque upon the whole ſyſtem. "Where waſt thou when I laid "the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou haſt "underſtanding. Whereupon are the foundations "thereof faſtened? or who laid the corner ſtone "thereof?" Job xxxviii.

Page 285. *note* (6).

Why is there ſo little ſaid of ſecond cauſes in this part of the Moſaic records?] We might ſurely add, why do we read ſo little, or rather nothing, of cauſes entirely unnatural and monſtrous, if Moſes borrowed, as ſome would inſinuate, from Pagan mythologies?—The ſobriety of the ſacred text upon many topics is a ſtrong proof of its inſpiration, when we conſider what incredible ſtories the *Talmud* and other writings of the Jews contain. This is the more particular, as the latter have been made a reaſon for *ſuſpecting* the Pentateuch, &c. of containing exaggerations and interpolations. See *Monthly Review of Dr. Jamieſon's Uſe of Sacred Hiſtory*, Aug. 1804. The canon of Scripture was complete before the *Tanaim* or *Miſhnical Doctors* began to add their traditions to them; ſee *Prideaux's Connection*, vol. ii. 67. The Rabbins adopted *Indian fables*; ſee *Wilford on Egypt and the Nile*, *Aſiatic Reſearches*, vol. iii.

Page 289. *note* (7).

Though, for what we know, derived, as they allege, from the Eaſt.] M. Mallet, in his remarks on the *Edda*, would derive the names of the days of the week from the *Eaſt*, with the other doctrines of the Celts: his principal object indeed is, to identify the *Scandinavian* and *Oriental* mythologies. It is certainly very probable, that we do derive the names of our days from the Eaſt: ſee upon this ſubject *M. le Gentil*, *Mémoires de l'Académ.—Sciences*, 1771. Part II. *Maurice's Indian Antiquities*, vol. v. *Halhed's Preface to his Code of Gentoo Laws*; *Kinderſley's Specimens of Hindu Literature*.

Page 290. *note* (8).

The hebdomadal diviſion, though originally of divine inſtitution.] Dr. Geddes conceives the ſix days creation to have been expreſsly invented by Moſes to account for the Jewiſh *ſabbath*. We might reaſonably aſk, what then could be the true account? It is much better ſaid by Profeſſor Jenkin, in his *Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*, book ii. c. 9, "If God ſaw fit to appoint one day in "ſeven to be a day of *reſt*, this was ſufficient reaſon "for the aſſignment of ſix days to the work of crea- "tion, independent of all other reaſons." Some have imagined, and among others St. Auſtin, (*de Civit. Dei*, lib. ii. c. 6.) that the diviſion of the work of creation into ſix days, was an invention of Moſes to accommodate himſelf to the dull minds of the Jews; and that this idea receives confirmation from Gen. ii. 4, 5, &c. where Moſes appears to collect the whole again into the compaſs of *one* day. But what bungling work would this be, to uſe artifice, and then betray himſelf! There is ſomething very extraordinary in the inſtitution of the ſabbath, as to both its moral and phyſical effects; and it is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, with Profeſſor Jenkin, that God might have been graciouſly pleaſed to conduct his own operations after a method, which ſhould ſerve for ever as an exemplar and model for the works of man. It has always ſtruck me as a remarkable circumſtance, that Apion, who ſeems to have ſpared no pains, nor ſcrupled any miſrepreſentations, to invalidate the antiquity of the Jews, when he expreſsly touched upon the circumſtance of their ſabbath, (*Joſephus contr. Ap.* lib. ii.) and went out of his way, to invent a paltry reaſon for their obſervation of the *ſeventh* day, ſhould not have inſiſted upon the higher antiquity of the hebdomadal reckoning. This he would ſurely have done, had it been a point at all capable of proof in thoſe days, or had it even been ſuſpected; eſpecially if there had been any grounds for what Dion Caſſius aſſerts, lib. xxxvii. namely, that both the hebdomadal reckoning, and diſtinction of days, was derived from the Egyptians; for this would have much better ſuited Apion's argument, (which was deſigned to prove that the Jews derived every thing from Egypt,) than a frivolous critique on

on the term *ſabbath*. But there is another circumſtance which ſtrikes me, upon this head, namely, that Apion, in his ſtrange attack upon the Jewiſh ſabbath, clearly acknowledges the ſeventh day to have been originally a day of *reſt*. Now it is remarkable, that this alſo ſeems to have deſcended with the hebdomadal mode of reckoning, as Philo obſerves; for after noticing the backwardneſs of all nations to adopt the cuſtoms of their neighbours, he writes, Ἀλλ' οὐχ ὧδε τὰ ἡμέτερα ἔχει· πάνλας γὰρ ἐπάγεται καὶ συνεπιστρέφει, βαρβάρους, Ἕλληνας, ἠπειρώτας, νησιώτας, ἔθνη τὰ ἑῷα, τὰ ἑσπέρια, Εὐρώπην, Ἀσίαν, ἅπασαν τὴν οἰκουμένην, ἀπὸ περάτων ἐπὶ πέρατα· τίς γὰρ τὴν ἱερὰν ἐκείνην ἑβδόμην ἐκ ἐκτετίμηκεν, ΑΝΕΣΙΝ ΠΟΝΩΝ καὶ ΡΑΣΤΩΝΗΝ αὐτῷ τε καὶ τοῖς πλησιάζουσιν, οὐκ ἐλευθέροις μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δούλοις, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ὑποζυγίοις διδάς; φθάνει γὰρ ἡ ἐκκεχειρία καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν ἀγέλην, καὶ ὅσα πρὸς ὑπηρεσίαν γέγονεν ἀνθρώπου, καθάπερ δοῦλα θεραπεύοντα τὸν φύσει δεσπότην, φθάνει καὶ πρὸς δένδρων καὶ φυτῶν ἅπασαν ἰδέαν· οὐ γὰρ ἔρνος, οὐ κλάδον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ πέταλον ἐφεῖται τεμεῖν, ἢ καρπὸν ἀντινοῦν δρέψασθαι, πάνλων διαφειμένων κατ' ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν, καὶ ὥσπερ ἐλευθερίαν ἀγόντων, ΚΟΙΝΩ ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑΤΙ μηδενὸς ἐπιψαύοντος. Περὶ βίν Μωσ. 447, edit. Paris, 1552. See alſo *Euſeb. Evang. Præpar.* l. xiii. 12. where there is as much in regard to the univerſal *ſacredneſs* of the ſeventh day. Now when we conſider that Plato was for referring the origin of all feſtivals and *days of reſt*, to the inſtitution of the gods, moved thereto by *pity for thoſe that were born for painful labour*, we may, I think, well conceive the hebdomadal mode of reckoning had the very origin Moſes aſſigns to it. Plato's expreſſions are curious, "Θεοὶ δὲ οἰκτείραντες τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπίπονον "πεφυκὸς γένος ΑΝΑΠΑΥΛΑΣ τε αὐτοῖς τῶν ΠΟΝΩΝ ἐτά-"ξατο τῶν ἑορτῶν ἀμοιβὰς τοῖς Θεοῖς." *De Leg.* lib. ii. If we put then theſe things together, and conſider that the Jewiſh reckoning of their days may be ſaid to have been ſtrictly *hebdomadal*, that is, they were named only according to their order, as firſt, ſecond, third, &c. and every ſeventh day alone was diſtinguiſhed by a title, and that title ſignificative of reſt—ſee *Joſephus cont. Apion*, and *Antiq. Jud.* lib. i. *Parkhurſt's Heb. Lexicon*, &c. a circumſtance which Apion ſeems to have paid regard to, even while he was endeavouring to find another origin for the term itſelf, and which, from the account of Philo, appears to have been gene-

rally tranſmitted with the hebdomadal mode of reckoning; while Plato expreſsly refers the ſtated days of *reſt* in the Pagan religions, to the gods, *in commiſeration of the labours of man*; we can ſcarce, I think, forbear to regard the *ſabbath* as the true cauſe and origin of the hebdomadal diviſion of time; more eſpecially if it was obſerved by the Patriarchs, which I think is ſcarce to be doubted; ſee *Patrick on Gen.* ii. 3; and hence poſſibly all the myſtery concerning the number SEVEN, which ſeems to have been a puzzle to the world almoſt as long as it has endured. I know ſome are ſtill for referring the hebdomadal reckoning, to the lunar revolutions of 28 days, which were adopted in the Eaſt, and which led to the ſubdiviſion of four weeks of ſeven days each, named after the planets. This would include ſomething of aſtronomy, and ſomething of idolatry; but the circumſtance of the ſeventh day being a ſabbath, or day of *reſt*, would ſtill remain to be accounted for. And this inſtitution is all we have to do with. Tacitus, in his ſtrange conceit about the Jews, that they meant to do honour to Saturn, by keeping Saturday holy, notices its *ſabbatical* character, "Septimo die *otium* placuiſſe ferunt." *Hiſtor.* lib. v. c. 4. It is curious, that the Chriſtians in Tertullian's time ſhould be accuſed of worſhipping the ſun, from their obſervation of *Sunday*; and that the Jews in Tacitus's time, for a ſimilar reaſon, ſhould be ſuſpected of honouring *Saturn:* but the one error may well ſerve to explain the other.

Page 291. *note* (9).

Depends on ſpeculations, which, however cautiouſly conducted, may never be allowed to diſprove a fact, capable of almoſt poſitive demonſtration.] Dr. Toulmin, whoſe two works on the *antiquity* and *eternity* of the world I have before had occaſion to mention, with an inconſiſtency which, it ſeems, he was himſelf unable to diſcern, in order to prove the great antiquity of our globe from effects, *ſlow*, *progreſſive*, and *uniform*, (for this is the chief drift of his argument,) preſents us with many curious and well authenticated accounts of the amazing effects of *volcanoes*, *earthquakes*, and *inundations*. From theſe we learn, that when nature even now acts upon a great

great ſcale, ſo far from requiring ages upon ages to produce a habitable world, or deſtroy one already inhabited, ſhe can in not many *days* ſend forth from the bowels of the earth, matter that would extend *more than four times round the globe*; which is the amount of Borellus's calculations of the lava that had flowed from Ætna in the eruption, 1669. We learn from other accounts, that *thirty days* only are requiſite to form an iſland ſix miles in diameter, or indeed only the half of this time, that is, fifteen days, to elevate from the bottom of a ſea three hundred and twenty yards deep, an iſland nine miles long, four and a half broad, and which riſes 360 feet above the water. We ſhould be careful ſurely, from the teſtimony only of theſe few facts, how we pretend to aſſign any fixed time for the works of nature in time paſt. Dr. Toulmin relies much on Mr. Brydone's celebrated *data* for calculating the age of the world from the converſion of lava into vegetable mould: but ſince this fact was received as an undoubted principle to judge from, it has been, unluckily for theſe ſyſtem-framers, diſcovered, that ſome lavas contain ingredients, diſpoſing them to this proceſs much ſooner than others, ſo that no certain concluſion can be drawn from this teſt. See *Watſon's Letters to Gibbon*; and *Kirwan on ſtony Subſtances*, *Iriſh Phil. Tranſ.* vol. v. This circumſtance is the more particular, becauſe it ſeems, in one inſtance, to correſpond with Dr. Toulmin's own ideas. I ſhall ſtate the very caſe he adduces, and the reflections he makes on it. "The late Emperor of Germany, in order to ſatisfy "his curioſity in ſo important a particular, having firſt "obtained permiſſion from the Grand Signior, cauſed "ſome piles of wood to be drawn up, on which the "bridge which Trajan had thrown over the Danube "had been founded. They examined attentively theſe "wooden piles, and obſerved that the petrifaction was "advanced no more than three fourths of an inch in "fifteen hundred and ſome odd years. From this cir-"cumſtance they *concluded* that a piece of wood of "equal thickneſs, and forty feet in length, would be "petrified an inch in twenty ages; and would employ, "to arrive at its total tranſmutation, ninety-ſix thouſand "years. And from hence, ſay they, we may judge of

" the *time* that *any petrified trees* diſcovered in the body " of the earth have been buried." Now, ſays Dr. Toulmin, and I think he is very right, this reaſoning is far from being concluſive. For, " *in certain circumſtances* " *and ſituations*, petrifaction may be ſuppoſed to ad- " vance in a manner *totally different*, and with *much* " *greater rapidity*, than in the waters of the Danube." So much depends on *circumſtances and ſituation*, in all the operations of nature, that, without the preciſe knowledge of both, it is abſurd to rely on calculations founded entirely on *data* of our own invention. In *this* reflection I might alſo boaſt of having Dr. Toulmin on my ſide: " How abſurd," (ſays he upon one occaſion,) " and fruitleſs, every recourſe to calculation on the " ſubject of the world's and nature's firſt exiſtence !" And ſo ſay we: but then Dr. Toulmin would have his calculations as well as others; and they appear to have ſo outrun all his expectations, that not being able to ſtop, after making the world inconceivably old, he determined at length that it muſt have been eternal.

Page 295. *note* (10).

The effects—as related by Moſes—have regard only to the power and providence of God; which thoſe muſt have leave to meaſure by their own Reaſon, who have ſo little Reaſon as not to ſee the abſurdity of it.] We cannot diſpenſe with obſerving, ſays Buffon, that Burnet, Woodward, Whiſton, and moſt of theſe authors, have committed an error which deſerves to be cleared up; which is that of having looked upon the deluge as poſſible by the action of natural cauſes, whereas Scripture preſents it to us as produced by the immediate will of God. *There is no natural cauſe which can produce on the whole ſurface of the earth the quantity of water required to cover the higheſt mountains:* and if even we could imagine a cauſe proportionate to this effect, it would ſtill be *impoſſible* to find another cauſe capable of making the water to diſappear. I like his caution about meddling with a miracle: but I ſtill think natural cauſes might have been made uſe of. At leaſt I cannot help diſregarding entirely all calculations to the contrary. An univerſal deluge, ſays M. de Voltaire with the utmoſt confidence, is *impoſſible*; the ſea

ſea *might* gradually, he tells us, have overflowed the continents; but then it *muſt* have taken up as much as two million two hundred thouſand years, to do it completely. *Philoſoph. Dict.* art. *Deluge.* I think Dr. Halley was as able to calculate as Voltaire; and he has ventured to aſſure us, that if, at the time of the deluge, the centre of gravitation was by divine power removed towards the middle of the then inhabited parts of the world, a change of place but the two thouſandth part of the radius of this globe were ſufficient to bury the tops of the higheſt hills under water. *Miſc. Curioſ.* vol. i. *Diſc. on Gravity.* Reaſon anſwering reaſon, ſays Sir Walter Raleigh, all the waters mixed within the earth are fully ſufficient to cover the ſpace of 30 miles in height. The extravagant altitude of hills he was willing to allow for. This may be fanciful; but certainly many as grave and ſober calculations have been made on the one ſide as the other. There is a very ingenious one, by Sir Henry Englefield, to be ſeen in *Geddes's Verſion of the Bible,* Gen. vii. 20; a calculation which might have ſobered the ſcepticiſm of the critic, had he not been particularly inclined to diſpute all the facts related by Moſes. The author of the Pentateuch certainly hints, at leaſt, at the operation of natural cauſes; and, ſo far from thinking them not ſufficient, or that there was a want of water to have gone further, had it been neceſſary, he particularly tells us, "the "fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven "were *ſtopped*, and the rains of heaven *reſtrained:*" which plainly intimates, that whatever ſecondary cauſes God was pleaſed to employ to bring the deluge on, they required a check from proceeding further than was neceſſary.

When we argue againſt any reputed acts of Providence, ſurely for our own credit we ought to be certain that we have a full comprehenſion of the ſeveral circumſtances that require to be conſidered. Thoſe ancient philoſophers who contended that the torrid and frigid zones were uninhabitable, fancied they had found a fair objection againſt the providence of God. But how inſignificant do all their reaſonings now appear, ſince we know that theſe large portions of the globe are not only habitable, but that God has ſo diſ-

poſed matters, as to render the former at leaſt in many reſpects pleaſant and delightful! Lucretius was one of thoſe philoſophers alluded to; and ſo very confident was he that he knew perfectly how to argue the matter, that he begins the ſubject with an "auſim confirmare"—

> "Hoc tamen ex *ipſis Cœli rationibus* auſim
> "Confirmare—
> "Inde duas porro prope partes fervidus ardor,
> "Aſſiduuſque geli caſus, *mortalibus aufert*." Lib. v.

See alſo *Ariſtot. Meteor.* lib. ii. c. 5. Pliny has the ſame, only he contradicts himſelf in other places. They might reaſon truly after all, as a very learned writer has obſerved, "in regard to the ordinary effects "of the ſun's preſence or abſence: but there is a con-"currence of ſeveral other things, which temper the "air, which they could not underſtand." *Orig. Sacr.* Part II. 91. How much more juſt muſt this remark appear, now we know, that the heat of the ſun's rays depends on the modifications they become ſubject to in their paſſage through the atmoſphere, and at the ſurface of the earth! If we look back to many old objections advanced againſt the truth of the Moſaic and Chriſtian revelations, we muſt acknowledge, that the objectors were not competent to judge of the ſubject; and let us beware leſt the ſame ſhould prove to be the caſe with us. Even the Ark, upon which ſo much has been ſaid, has as many calculations in its favour, as againſt it: and ſome very curious ones: ſee *Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 465. and *Hartley on Man*, p. 371. "So," ſays the latter very learned author, "that what was thought an objection in this particu-"lar, is even ſome evidence."

We are undoubtedly arrived at one certainty in regard to the poſſibility of an univerſal deluge, whether our calculations will prove the fact or not: we know that the ſea has one time or other covered all our continents, and depoſited regular marine reliquiæ, to the height of 14190 Engliſh feet above the level of the ſea. *Hiſt. de l'Acad. des Sciences*, 1770. *Playfair's Illuſtrations*, p. 200. Now if we enquire of philoſophers, how it happens that the ſea no longer overflows theſe parts, and

and in what manner it *can* have abandoned its ancient bed; if ſome tell us, that it could not have retired ſuddenly, others will as confidently aſſure us, it could not have retreated gradually; and therefore I muſt confeſs, that I have long been ſatisfied, let what will become of the phyſical poſſibility of an univerſal deluge, that this very circumſtance of the ſea's retreat is, in reſpect to the utmoſt efforts of human knowledge, (to diſcover the exact ſtate of the caſe,) *miraculous*; and as one miracle is as credible as another, I am quite ready to believe *that*, which is confirmed by many ſtrong circumſtances in the hiſtory of man, which is expreſsly recorded as an act of God's providence, and which is ſo conſiſtent with the natural appearances of the body of the earth, that (whether philoſophers can find water enough, or not, to cover our globe, in the common ſtorehouſes of nature) we cannot poſſibly doubt the general fact of the water's having covered the continental parts of the earth, though Moſes could not have been acquainted with the evidences *we* have for the fact, even had he been a profeſſed geologiſt.

Page 296. *note* (11).

The cataſtrophe of the deluge, for what we know, may be fully ſufficient to account for all thoſe ſurpriſing circumſtances of foſſil bodies found in places where no correſpondent animals or vegetables now exiſt.] I have already obſerved, in Note (3), that we are not to attribute to the Moſaic deluge the depoſition of *all* the marine reliquiæ we find in our ſtrata; and therefore I hope I ſhall not be ſuſpected of a deſire to ſolve every difficulty by a miracle, to the excluſion of all examination and enquiry. Of things poſſible, we are certainly not competent judges; but of what is probable, we may be allowed to form conjectures. That our ſtrata have been formed under water ſeems an unqueſtionable fact; and under water abounding in marine animals of different deſcriptions, cannot be doubted. That much vegetable matter has been overwhelmed alſo ſeems certain; and therefore we muſt conclude, that at one time or other the ſea has covered the continental parts of the globe, ſubſequently to the exiſtence of animals and growth of vegetables: and we are therefore certainly inhabiting

inhabiting "a dry land," which has undergone great changes. Why ſhould we wonder then to find things in the bowels of the earth indicative of ſuch changes? "When we are informed, that the earth which we "now inhabit is the *burying-place* of a former earth, it "is as reaſonable, that we ſhould dig up the remains "and ruins of it, as that we ſhould find the bones and "coffins of former generations in the earth of a church-"yard." *Jones's Sermon on the Natural Hiſtory of the Earth*, &c. We read of great changes, we have the evidences of ſuch changes under our feet; and yet ſhall we ſuffer nothing to ſolve our doubts, but our own ſurmiſes and theories, founded on the common courſe of things? Whereas the very circumſtance that ſuch changes have happened, as we are unable to account for according to our preſent notions of things, ſhould make us very diffident of aſſigning cauſes at random; much more of diſputing a record, which expreſsly tells us of a different ſtate of things. Whether Moſes had ever told us ſo or not, our own obſervations would now ſerve to convince us, that as our continents are evidently in a poſtdiluvian ſtate, there muſt have been alſo an antediluvian ſtate of things, in which nothing perhaps was exactly as we ſee it now. We have the teſtimony both of ſacred and profane hiſtory, to the fact of men's lives having been formerly much longer than they now are: this would ſeem to indicate of itſelf very important changes in the phyſical conſtitution of the globe, though it is not within the bounds of probability, that we ſhould ever be able to trace what thoſe changes have exactly been. Nor do I think it will ever be more poſſible for us to account exactly for the remains of tropical animals now found near the polar regions. The only queſtion concerning them ſeems to be, whether they lived and died where we find them depoſited, or whether they have been violently tranſported thither by the waters of the deluge. Mr. Kirwan has eſpouſed the latter opinion, in oppoſition to ſome of the moſt eminent of his cotemporaries: he apprehends, that at the time of the deluge an immenſe torrent flowed northward, carrying with it the products of the tropical countries. See his Paper in the 6th vol. of the *Iriſh Tranſactions*.

Thoſe

Thoſe who have imagined they lived and died where we find them, have generally concluded, that the climate has undergone a change; but this ſeems now to be thought unneceſſary. The body of a rhinoceros has recently been diſcovered, ſo little changed, that we muſt ſubſtitute one wonder for another, it ſeems, and rather believe that tropical animals could formerly endure a Siberian climate, than that a body buried in a warm climate could have reſiſted putrefaction. See *Playfair's Illuſtrations*, pp. 473, 474. The ſame phenomenon is ſuppoſed to invalidate every hypotheſis of a violent tranſportation; as the body could not have reſiſted the deſtructive effects of ſuch an inundation. But without pretending to ſettle theſe differences, I muſt confeſs, I ſhould rather incline to think the circumſtances of the globe changed, than the nature and conſtitution of theſe animals. And though I am *convinced* by no *hypotheſis*, yet I do not ſee why the Huttonian theory, as Profeſſor Playfair inſiſts, is the only one that can reſolve our doubts upon this head; or why this ſingle inſtance ſhould ſeem ſo calculated to exclude every other hypotheſis. I do not ſee why even the rhinoceroſes found in Siberia may not have enjoyed there a much higher temperature, during their lives, and yet their bodies, buried at the time of the deluge, or ſince, been expoſed to cold ſufficient to preſerve them from putrefaction. I only ſpeak of the poſſibility of things; and ſo far, I muſt ſay, M. de Luc's theory ſeems the leaſt exceptionable, by connecting both theſe facts; for he ſuppoſes, that, by the ſudden ſinking of the ſea, the level of which is always the ſenſible baſe of the atmoſphere, lands, which formerly occupied the lower regions of the air, were raiſed to a much colder region. There is no doubt, but that this may have happened; and though perhaps it is no nearer the exact truth than other hypotheſes, yet it is certainly ſtrictly philoſophical, conſidering that the effect of the ſun's rays is now well known to depend ſo immediately on the condition of the atmoſphere, and the ſtate of things at the ſurface of the earth. That ſuch changes do take place upon a much ſmaller ſcale, and more gradually, I have ſhewn in the Sermon, by a reference to many authors, who deſcribe things

things differently from what we perceive them to be now. If paſt changes ſeem to have been more rapid and more extenſive, we certainly read of correſpondent cataſtrophes. The Chineſe, in their account of the deluge, have actually preſerved a tradition, that at the time of the deluge the heavens ſunk lower towards the north. See *Faber's Horæ Moſaicæ*. See alſo the Appendix to *Douglas's Diſſertation on the Antiquity of the Earth*.

M. de Luc very judiciouſly obſerves, that we are ſtill too ignorant of the compoſition of the atmoſphere, to ſpeak deciſively upon ſuch ſubjects; and I doubt we are much too ignorant of many other things, to be able to ſolve various geological phenomena, eſpecially ſuch as we are ſpeaking of: for how do we know what ſpecific cauſes may have operated in the body of the earth, to retard or prevent the effects of putrefaction in the body of the rhinoceros alluded to? which is acknowledged to be an *inſtantia ſingularis*. We happen to have an apparent cauſe in the coldneſs of Siberia; but this is far from being a key to all our difficulties, as every one muſt perceive. If it tells us how the dead body has been preſerved, it by no means informs us how the living body was enabled to exiſt. We muſt ſtill acknowledge ſome great change; and the only queſtions will be, when did this happen, and how did it happen? Upon both theſe ſubjects there is as much diſcordancy of opinion, as upon any other; ſome making the preſent ſtate of things to be very ancient, and others comparatively recent. M. de Luc has certainly diſtinguiſhed himſelf moſt by his enquiries into the recent origin of our continents; his reſearches being directed principally to five claſſes of phenomena: the depoſited materials of vegetation continually accumulating; the change of vegetables into turfy earth; the diminution of fertility on the high mountains, from the accumulations of ſnow and ice; the depoſitions of the waters of the mountains, and the ſubſtances, which the rivers carry to the ſea: but all his facts adduced to prove the low antiquity of our continents certainly deſerve to be well conſidered.

I have already given one extract from M. Dolomieu, in confirmation of M. de Luc's hypotheſis of the low anti-

antiquity of our continents: I ſhall tranſcribe two more, together with a ſimilar teſtimony on the part of M. de Sauſſure. They muſt be well known to naturaliſts, but not ſo generally known, perhaps, to theologians; who, without any means of verifying ſuch facts from actual obſervation, ſhould at leaſt be freed from all alarm ariſing from the extravagant calculations with which the world have been amuſed, and in regard to which I have endeavoured to ſhew, firſt, that they muſt all be, in the nature of things, extremely precarious; ſecondly, that they do not appear immediately to affect the Scripture hiſtory of *man*, even if they ſhould ſeem to be well founded; and thirdly, that they are diſallowed by many very eminent and reſpectable naturaliſts. In *Rozier's Journal XL.* M. Dolomieu, in his Paper *ſur les Pierres compoſées*, &c. thus expreſſes himſelf: "Je di-"rai donc *avec M. de Luc*, l'état actuel de nos con-"tinens n'eſt pas ancien; je penſerai avec lui qu'il "n'y a pas long-temps qu'ils ont été donnés ou *rendus* "*ainſi modifiés* à l'empire de l'homme." And again, "Je dirai auſſi qu'il n'y a point de meſure pour le temps "dans les époques antérieures, et que l'imagination "peut y prodiguer des ſiècles avec autant de facilité "que les minutes." *Ib.*

M. de Sauſſure's teſtimony is to the following effect: "Les blocs de pierre, dont eſt chargé le bas de ce gla-"cier, invitent à une reflexion aſſez importante: lorſque "l'on conſidere leur nombre, et que l'on penſe qu'ils "ſe dépoſent et s'accumulent à cette extrémité du gla-"cier à meſure que ces glaces ſe fondent, on eſt étonné "qu'il n'y en ait pas des amas beaucoup plus conſidé-"rables: et cette obſervation d'accord en cela avec "beaucoup d'autres, donne lieu de croire, *comme le fait* "*M. de Luc*, que l'état actuel de notre globe n'eſt "point auſſi ancien que quelques philoſophes l'ont ima-"giné." *Voyage dans les Alpes*, vol. iii. 29. I know there are philoſophers, perhaps as eminent, who may be ſurpriſed to ſee obſervations revived, which they apprehend their theories have effectually contradicted. I can only judge for myſelf; I have carefully examined all that have come in my way, and I confeſs I ſee no reaſon whatever for withholding the evidences I have adduced.

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As to the queſtion concerning the ſpecific cauſe of ſuch changes as have happened, it has been common to refer them to a change in the poſition of the axis of the globe; a circumſtance I have noticed in the Sermon. But ſome very eminent aſtronomers, and among theſe MM. Caſſini and Le Gentil, have declared it to be their opinion, that the deluge did not occaſion any change in the axis of the globe, or at all affect the celeſtial movements: and I believe there is in *Rozier's Journal* a Paper by the celebrated M. Lalande, expreſsly to *prove* this. Whether it did ſo happen, or that the centre of gravity was altered, as many others have ſuppoſed, I cannot pretend to judge; but I muſt notice, that Dr. Toulmin, who believes that the poſitions of the axis of the globe may have been changed, inſiſts upon it, that if this change has taken place, it *muſt have been* an event of "a *ſlow* and *gradual* progreſſion." We need only aſk, why ſo? and I aſk it the more particularly, becauſe the ſame dogmatical writer profeſſes to think, that every thing related of an univerſal deluge muſt needs impreſs us with inſurmountable incredulity: "In ſhort," ſays he, "they never can "be reconciled, never can be thought reconcileable to "Reaſon, by the ſenſible and enlightened part of the "human ſpecies." And yet he is diſpoſed to think the poſition of the axis of the globe has been changed; which, for what we know, may have been, and in the eſtimation of many ſenſible and very curious writers actually was, the very cauſe, under the providence of God, of the other changes at leaſt, that took place at the time of the deluge; only he is *certain* this could not have happened quickly or ſuddenly; and there we muſt leave him.

As to the extinction of animals, now found in a foſſil ſtate, though a curious circumſtance, I cannot ſee that it furniſhes any poſitive argument, in regard either to the high or low antiquity of the globe. For though it may be intimately connected with the other phyſical changes, which the globe has undergone, it tells us nothing with regard to the particular period of ſuch changes. M. de Luc notices the *ſucceſſion* of *different* ſpecies of organized bodies to be found in our ſtrata, many of which are not now to be met with. And as his

his hypotheſis is founded on the ſuppoſition of ſucceſſive precipitations from a liquid, he conceives, that the determining cauſes of ſuch precipitations wrought ſuch changes in the remaining ſea, and in the atmoſphere, as materially to affect the animals inhabiting them; and even to occaſion the extinction of many, as of the *cornua ammonis*, *belemnite*, &c. This is undoubtedly very plauſible, and relates to a difficulty too often overlooked. See alſo the *Protogæa of Leibnitz*, §. 26. The exact periods of ſuch operations ſtill remain inſcrutable, though M. de Luc's *epochs* of *nature* (for he alſo conceives the ſix days of Moſes to have been ſix *periods*) are certainly by no means ſo extravagant as M. Buffon's.

The remains of marine animals we know to be convertible into a mineral ſubſtance, of great uſe and importance in the economy of the world; and therefore man may have been as much benefited by their extinction, as by their exiſtence. Their great abundance during the period of the formation of our ſtrata, may reaſonably be thought a ſpecial act of God's providence; and as we are taught to believe, that the waters exiſted before the dry land of the globe, their preexiſtence is highly probable; and it is remarkable, that in this particular all our geological enquiries tend to confirm the Moſaic account. As to the extinction of *terreſtrial* animals, this may alſo have happened, and certainly ſeems to have happened, in ſome inſtances, by a change of climates; but ſome may become extinct by accident, and I think this a circumſtance deſerving our conſideration.

M. de Sauſſure thinks it probable, (*Voyage dans les Alpes*, vol. iii.) that both the *chamois* and the *marmotte* will ſoon be extinct; and we know, that in the accounts of ſome of the Roman triumphs and feſtivals, we read of *many camelopards* exhibited for the amuſement and wanton ſport of the people: an animal now ſo rare, as ſcarcely ever to be ſeen or known. The poſſibility of the extinction of any ſpecies of animals, if the world has endured for a vaſt ſucceſſion of ages, much more if it was deſigned to endure for ever, is a circumſtance, which may afford much matter of ſpeculation to philoſophers. In the three inſtances above,

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it would not be difficult to *meaſure the time*, at leaſt between the great *abundance* of certain ſpecies, and ſuch a ſtate of rarity, as borders upon extinction. In the mean time, no new animals are brought into exiſtence to ſupply their places, nor any proviſion, that I know of, made for ſuch a renovation of things. This may ſurely not be conſidered as affording any argument in proof of the great antiquity of the preſent ſtate of things, when we find, from the foſſil remains of animals that are dug up, many ſpecies are already become extinct; and we have certain proof, that many are proceeding to extinction, not imperceptibly, but rapidly.

I have already had occaſion to notice the expence and conſumption of metals and fuel, without any adequate means of renewal diſcoverable. I believe our own country would ſupply inſtances among the animals, correſpondent to the above. Not to dwell upon the extinction of *wolves*, which was brought about by deſign, many ſpecies of wild birds are every day becoming more rare, as quails, buſtards, the wood growſe, or cock of the wood, &c. If it ſhould be ſaid, that theſe wild animals are diminiſhed by the depredations of man, and that they are not miſſed in conſequence of the greater increaſe of domeſticated animals; yet both theſe circumſtances being immediately connected with the progreſs of ſociety and civilization of man, become in themſelves chronometers by no means deſpicable: they point to an end, and ſurely alſo to a beginning. Thoſe that are only found in a foſſil ſtate, give intimation of a former ſtate of things, and a revolution of great extent; all which we have recorded. Thoſe whoſe decreaſe and extinction are meaſurable and aſſignable, ſeem ſo connected with the population of the world, and the progreſs of ſociety, as to keep pace with both. What may be renewed or multiplied by art and care, for the uſe of man, may be long continued; but nature ſeems evidently to point both to a beginning and an end, by no means ſo diſtant from each other, as ſome ſeem to ſuppoſe. Though calculations can never determine what muſt depend only on the will and providence of God, yet the waſte and poſitive deſtruction of many conſumable commodities, (ſome of which, as metals, are thought to owe their production

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to convulſions, which have ſhaken the very foundations of the earth; ſee *Playfair*, 254, and *Wallerius*, §. xxiv.) added to the viſible decreaſe and probable extinction of wild animals, ſeem to point to a period not very diſtant, when, to repeat M. Dolomieu's expreſſion, our preſent continents "ont été donnés ou rendus *ainſi modifiés à* "*l'empire de l'homme.*"

Page 298. *note* (12).

While the fact itſelf undoubtedly ſtands corroborated by many collateral teſtimonies.] There is no fact of antiquity, perhaps, of which ſuch a variety of proofs can be adduced, as of the deluge. It is interwoven with all mythologies, and directly alluded to by many ancient hiſtorians. Beſides the references already adduced, ſee *Revelation examined with Candour*, Diſſertations xiii. xiv. and *Dr. Jamieſon on the Uſe of Sacred Hiſtory*, vol. i. Diſquiſition i.; where the Pagan confirmations of this event, as well as of the creation, are not merely referred to, but very ingeniouſly, and without extravagance, reconciled with the Moſaic records. That author alſo ſhews, that what the Pagan accounts omitted was exactly what Moſes, as an inſpired writer, was likely to be commiſſioned to record, as God's warning to the world, &c. not noticed by Beroſus, in his account of Xithuthrus.

Page 302. *note* (13).

But which, beſides all other teſtimonies, the face of the whole globe, and the obſervations of naturaliſts, have been ſince found, in a moſt ſurpriſing manner, to corroborate and confirm.] Mr. Hume, ſpeaking of the Pentateuch, obſerves, that it is not corroborated by any concurring teſtimony. Surely, that the traditions of all nations, and the records of all ſucceeding ages, and all ſubſequent diſcoveries, ſhould generally concur with the facts reported by Moſes, is the moſt convincing teſtimony we could require, conſidering the nature of thoſe facts. Rouſſeau alſo is for inſiſting on *univerſal ſigns*, as a teſt of a Revelation. Now we may ſurely aſſert, that we have ſuch in the teſtimonies alluded to; and much ſtronger than thoſe on which he would found his Natural Religion. The latter have continually been miſtaken

and misunderstood: but the defect of all contradictory evidences in regard to the facts and events recorded by Moses, historical, miraculous, and natural; as well as the confirmation they have constantly received, from the *face of nature*, the reports of travellers, and the consent of naturalists, may well be adduced as signs, "qui "sont de tous les temps, et de tous les lieux, égale-"ment sensibles à tous les hommes, grands et petits, "savans et ignorans, Européens, Indiens, Africains, "Sauvages." *Emile*, vol. iii. 91.

SERMON VII.

JUDE, ver. 10.

But theſe ſpeak evil of thoſe things which they know not.

IN my former Diſcourſe I have endeavoured to ſhew, as briefly as I could, but with a view to particular queſtions, and ſuch as appeared to me of the firſt importance, that in the three branches of Metaphyſics, Phyſics, and Hiſtory, notwithſtanding the acknowledged advancement of human ſcience, Reaſon cannot with propriety, at this day, boaſt of any advantages obtained over Revelation. I ſhall now proceed, under the head of CRITICISM, to notice ſome things, which the conduct of our opponents renders peculiarly neceſſary.

Under the head of Criticiſm, then, we have three things to complain of: firſt, the contempt thrown on Learning and Criticiſm in

general, for particular ends: ſecondly, the frequent abuſe of Criticiſm and authorities: and thirdly, demands made upon us, which we are under no obligation to anſwer.

And firſt, as to the contempt thrown on Learning and Criticiſm in general. The author of the *Age of Reaſon* has ventured to aſſure the world, that only *living* languages are of uſe in the advancement of knowledge(r); and we know, that, in this expreſſion, the chief knowledge he had in view was ſuch as he eſpecially thought conducive to the overthrow of revealed Religion. A much more eminent writer[s] on the continent, with exactly the ſame views, but with an air of levity quite unbefitting the ſubject, aſſures us alſo, that in the day of judgment we ſhall not be queſtioned, whether we have miſtaken one Hebrew letter for another, as a *Caph* for a *Beth*, or a *Yod* for a *Vau*. We know the impreſſion that ſuch inſinuations muſt be calculated to make on the minds of a large majority of the people; and therefore it may not be amiſs to ſhew, that as far as Criticiſm and Learning are become neceſ-

[s] Voltaire.

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ſary to the promulgation and due underſtanding of our moſt holy Religion, they have been *eſpecially rendered ſo* by the conduct of thoſe very perſons, who, for reaſons, no doubt, well known to themſelves, thus pretend to object to their utility and importance. For though there can be no danger from ſuch vain and confident aſſertions, and from ſuch quarters, to the cauſe of literature in general; no danger, ſurely, of any being turned aſide from the important ſtudy of the dead languages by the cavils of a Paine, or the ſarcaſms of a Voltaire; yet, in reſpect to Revelation, and Chriſtianity more particularly, ſuch inſinuations are always likely to receive ſupport from a common prejudice among believers themſelves; a prejudice continually made a handle of by Deiſts, namely, that a religion eſpecially deſigned to be preached to the *poor*, muſt have been ſo communicated, as to require no extraordinary capacity, nor any great extent of learning, in thoſe who were to derive from it the bleſſings and benefits of inſtruction, of hope, of comfort, and ſalvation!

But all this may be granted, and yet Learning and Criticiſm loſe nothing of their im-

portance; while it will be eaſy to ſhew, that ſuch diſparagement and contempt of both, as I have above alluded to, have an immediate tendency to deprive us of the only weapon, which can effectually defend, not the learned only, but the *people at large*, from the deluſions of ſophiſtry, and the miſ-repreſentations of ignorance; from both of which, it is not too much to ſay, the world has never been more in danger, than during this boaſted age of Reaſon. For though Criticiſm and Learning are treated in this contemptuous manner by Deiſts, when they interfere with their views; yet they do not diſdain to apply them in ſupport of their own cauſe, to the great abuſe of both, and the greateſt poſſible injury to the cauſe of truth. The very work entitled the *Age of Reaſon*, which was expreſsly intended to be diſſeminated among all ranks of people, and would have been ſo, but for the timely and wiſe interpoſition of the Legiſlature, though certainly not either learned or critical in the ſtrict ſenſe of thoſe terms, yet contained much reading miſapplied, and many very ignorant attempts at Criticiſm, for the baſeſt and moſt cruel purpoſes.

But

But a more appropriate example could ſcarcely perhaps be adduced, than in the caſe of the laſt writer I had occaſion to mention. The unlearned will, no doubt, be eaſily perſuaded, that it is unworthy of God's majeſty and juſtice, to queſtion any ignorant perſon concerning any doctrines he may have eſpouſed, through the mere miſtake of one Hebrew letter for another: yet very much more than what that author would repreſent to us may unqueſtionably depend on ſuch an error; nor would it be difficult to ſhew at length, as a proof particularly applicable, that the very writer in queſtion has much aggravated a very futile charge, which he has advanced againſt the *divine authority of the Bible*, by the unwarrantable inſertion or miſconſtruction of one of the very letters he mentions (a), though he was himſelf perhaps quite unaware of this, and unaware beſides, that it was an error in the tranſlation he uſed. The injury done to the cauſe of truth is nevertheleſs the ſame; nor can ſuch an error be accounted ſo venial a one, in a perſon who preſumptuouſly undertook to inſtruct mankind better than the Bible itſelf, and would by his indecent cavils have

inſinuated, that there is no utility in a branch of ſcience, of which he was himſelf inexcuſably ignorant, and which alone could have enabled us to detect (as has been the caſe in many inſtances) the falſehood of his aſſertions, and the ſophiſtry of his arguments.

Again, nothing is more eaſy than to perſuade the ignorant, that Learning and Criticiſm are unneceſſary to the due underſtanding of the Bible; and yet, upon the very pretence of ſuperior learning and wiſdom, to paſs upon them a new ſenſe for every ſcriptural term that may be called in queſtion [b]. A knowledge of the dead languages muſt neceſſarily be of the moſt eſſential uſe, where the living and vernacular tongues, into which they may have been tranſlated, are thus liable to perverſion and miſrepreſentation. It is ſcarcely poſſible to conceive, that any unlettered Chriſtian could miſinterpret the received verſion of the New Teſ-

[b] See the IVth Part of *Edwards's Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm*; his account of the figurative mode of interpreting Scripture, reſorted to by the Socinians, and their great abuſe of Scriptural terms.

tament,

tament, in regard to the important doctrines of redemption and atonement by the blood of Chriſt; eſpecially when he had been in the habit of hearing or reading the ancient accounts of the Jewiſh ſacrifices, and the Apoſtle's compariſon of the Chriſtian oblation, in the Epiſtle to the Hebrews. But when men will come forward to aſſure them, that the redemption and atonement they there read of do by no means ſignify redemption and atonement by the blood of Chriſt, as a ſacrifice for the ſins of the whole world; and that not only the Greek terms for thoſe expreſſions, but the Hebrew, from which they were regularly derived, or by which they muſt at all events be explained [c], mean otherwiſe; and that neither the ancient Hebrew or Chriſtian writers had any idea of ſuch an atonement for ſin; how would the truth ſuffer, if there were not ſome perſons to be found, competently ſkilled in thoſe languages, to inveſtigate the original meaning and deſign of the ſacred writers, as well as of the Chriſtian Fathers

[c] See *Magee* on the term ἁμαρτία, in the 27th note to his firſt *Sermon on Atonement*.

and

and Jewiſh Rabbis; and to certify the unlearned, that the common interpretation and ſenſe of thoſe expreſſions are what ſhould be received, and ſuch as may be ſafely relied on; and that they were ſo uſed and underſtood by the very writers cited and referred to! I am not merely ſuppoſing a caſe that might happen; the caſe really has happened; and I think I may with confidence refer at once to the valuable works of *Bull*, *Stillingfleet*, *Leſlie*, *Edwards*, as well as of our own cotemporaries *Horſley* and *Magee*, for ſuch proofs of ignorance or prevarication, or both, on the part of *certain expoſitors of the Scriptures*, as muſt amount to a poſitive demonſtration of the caſe. (3)

Who could ever ſuppoſe, that when our Saviour is ſaid to have been *made man*, to have been *made fleſh*, to have *taken our nature upon him*, to have *been born of a virgin*, and ſo forth, that the birth and ſubſiſtence of a mere human creature was intended? Are thoſe who have been taught to believe in the preexiſtence and divinity of our Saviour, to be robbed of their faith by the vain aſſurance, that theſe expreſſions are idiomatical, and not deſigned to expreſs more, than

than that our Lord was born into the world like all other human beings [d]?

But indeed without the advantages of ſolid Learning and ſound Criticiſm, to counteract and expoſe the ignorance or preſumption of modern Deiſts, it is not the *character* of our bleſſed Lord only that may be miſrepreſented, but his *very exiſtence* may be brought into queſtion. It has been aſſerted in times paſt, that the greateſt infidel that ever lived had never pretended to diſbelieve that there was ſuch a perſon as our Saviour Chriſt [e]: this was reſerved for more modern times; for our own boaſted times of Reaſon and knowledge. A foreign writer [f], very popular, and ſtill I believe living, has ventured to aſſert, that the exiſtence of Jeſus is no better proved than that of *Oſiris*, or *Hercules*, *Fôt*, or *Bedou*; and attempts are made, by a long criticiſm on the name of *Chriſt*, to perſuade us, that our Saviour was no

[d] See in *Biſhop Horſley's Tracts* his IVth Letter to Dr. Prieſtley, and the Firſt Supplemental Diſquiſition.

[e] See *Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*, Part iv. ch. 2. and *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, 5th edit. vol. ii. 365.

[f] See the Notes to *M. Volney's Ruins or Revolutions of Empires*; and Note (4) at the end of this Diſcourſe.

other

other than the Indian *Viſchenou*[g]; that the Hindu and Chriſtian Trinities are identical; and that the whole of Chriſtianity is derived from the books of the Mithriacs, and is capable of being reſolved into an idolatrous worſhip of the viſible Fountain of Light. He even cites the Chriſtian Fathers in proof of this, and Tertullian in particular, whom he makes to ſay, that "many ſuppoſe, with "*greater probability*, that the *Sun* is our "God; and they refer us to the religion of "the Perſians." But when Tertullian is allowed to ſpeak for himſelf, ſo far from *countenancing* any ſuch opinion, we find him expreſsly pointing out the origin of their *error* and *miſtake*; which was, that the Chriſtians prayed to the *Eaſt*, and kept *Sunday* ſacred; Diem *Solis*. All his arguments to prove our Saviour to have been the viſionary Deity of India, turn on the etymology of the Greek title given to our Saviour, which he traces through the Sanſcrit, Hebrew, Arabic, and even Spaniſh; wholly regardleſs all the while of *St. John's* etymology of the title, and of its intimate and

[g] I uſe M. Volney's ſpelling.

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unqueſtionable connection with the Hebrew משיח; wholly regardleſs of his own favourite authority, Tertullian's expreſs alluſion to its proper and acknowledged ſignification, in his Treatiſe againſt Praxeas; wholly regardleſs of *his* open appeal to the public records of Rome, in atteſtation of the *birth*, *death*, and *reſurrection* of our Lord (4).

One ſuch inſtance out of the very many that might be adduced, if the time would ſerve, of the great abuſe of Criticiſm for the purpoſes of infidelity, may, I hope, be ſufficient, not only to vindicate the uſe and importance of ſound Learning, in theſe days, and eſpecially of the knowledge of the dead languages; but to prove, that there never was a time when they were more indiſpenſably neceſſary to the cauſe of truth in general. For whether the Bible be authentic or not, whether it be the work of man, or the word of God, it muſt equally merit to be protected from ſuch miſrepreſentation and abuſe, ſuch groſs perverſion, and ſuch freaks of fancy.

But ſound Criticiſm is not only particularly wanted at preſent to ſecure us from the wanton attacks of Infidels; but for the

purpoſe

purpoſe of maintaining and enforcing, even among Chriſtians, the moſt important and peculiar doctrines of the Goſpel. That of atonement in particular is ſtill diſputed, and every attempt made to explain away the moſt obvious paſſages that can be held to bear the ſmalleſt alluſion to it; though if ever one event was explanatory of another, if any two incidents may be ſaid to be connected with each other in the way of type and antitype, of ſhadow and ſubſtance, ſurely it may be inſiſted on, that the death of Chriſt, and the Jewiſh ſacrifices under the law of Moſes, were exactly ſo related to each other: nor can I think it poſſible for any truly candid, ingenuous, and unprejudiced perſon to deny the reſemblance and analogy traced out at large by the Author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews[h]. If the blood of Chriſt had no atoning virtue, if his death was not ſtrictly ſacrificial, what are we to underſtand by the ninth and tenth chapters of that argumentative and moſt inſtructive Epiſtle? The expreſſions are ſo clearly il-

[h] See alſo the references in the 27th note to the firſt of *Dr. Magee's Sermons on Atonement*, p. 142.

luſtrative

luſtrative of all that we could poſſibly conceive of atonement and redemption through the blood of Chriſt, that if attempts had not repeatedly been made to explain away their literal meaning and genuine ſenſe, by the moſt unwarrantable explications of them, one could ſcarcely ſuppoſe it poſſible, that the caſe could admit of a doubt[i]. But theſe expoſitors, when Criticiſm fails them, have alſo their recourſe to *Reaſon;* and we are aſſailed with demands, which we are certainly under no obligation to anſwer or regard. Human Reaſon, admitted as a judge on ſuch a ſubject, will, no doubt, find much to object to; for ſin cannot be too eaſily pardonable, nor God too unconditionally merciful, for her purpoſes[k]. She will al-

[i] "That Chriſt ſuffered and died as an atonement for the "ſins of mankind, is a doctrine ſo conſtantly and ſo ſtrongly "enforced through every part of the New Teſtament, that "whoever will ſeriouſly peruſe thoſe writings, and deny that "it is there, may with as much reaſon and truth, after reading "the works of Thucydides and Livy, aſſert, that in them no "mention is made of any facts relative to the hiſtories of "Greece and Rome." *Soame Jenyns's Internal Evidence*, p. 29.

[k] Mr. Paine confeſſes, that he thinks it is "man's greateſt "conſolation to believe, that *he ſtands in no need of redemp-* "*tion.*"

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ways fancy she renders God honour by every deduction she can make from the apparatus of redemption. She will have no blood to be shed by the decree of God; she will not have the innocent to suffer for the guilty; she will not have God to require atonement, or man to need it. But all *a priori* judgment of the case is superseded. We may not reason as to what might have been, when the Scriptures are admitted to be the word of God; it is our part only to enquire what has been[1]; to examine deeply and minutely into the history of sacrifices, the Jewish above all; to take the account of our Saviour's ministry from the written records of it, from his own declarations therein transmitted to us; and to weigh well the most extraordinary correspondency of doc-

[1] "The Christian Religion is a Divine Revelation, of the "evidences of the truth of which right *Reason* is to judge. "The difference between the Socinians and our Churches on "this article seems to be this: we apply reasoning to the *evi-* "*dences* of Revelation, and they to all the *doctrines* of it. Ac- "cording to us, Reason has done its office when it has ob- "tained evidence, that *God speaks*: according to them, Reason "is to reject what *is spoken*, if it cannot comprehend it." See Notes to *Claude's Essay on the Composition of a Sermon*, vol. i. 153.

trine

trine on this point, to be found in the two covenants.

This is not a queſtion now determinable by any ſpeculative views of the attributes of God, or the condition of man. It is a queſtion, that has been before the world from its firſt creation. To be determined with preciſion, when the moſt obvious ſenſe of Scripture is diſputed, it requires a deep inſight into the hiſtory and antiquities of the moſt remarkable people that ever lived on the face of the earth: it requires a moſt critical knowledge of the ſeveral languages in which the Scriptures were firſt written; not merely to aſcertain the doctrine ſaid to be contained therein, for without perverſion it is plain enough; but to be able to detect and expoſe the various miſinterpretations, which have been put upon the ſeveral terms applied to this great doctrine, as well as upon the ſeveral cuſtoms and ceremonies connected therewith: it requires a capacity of examining not only into the opinions of the ancient Fathers of the Chriſtian Church, but into thoſe of the ancient Jews alſo; for all theſe have been ſummoned to give their

teſtimony, but often in a moſt unjuſtifiable manner.

I have enumerated theſe ſeveral requiſites for the due underſtanding and deciſion of this particular point of controverſy, not only to evince the abſolute neceſſity of real Learning and juſt Criticiſm, but to ſhew, that ſo far from our having reaſon to apprehend any ill effects from the advancement of knowledge, in regard to ſuch queſtions, we have certainly much more reaſon to complain of a great want and deficiency either of learning or honeſty, in many who have of late rejected theſe doctrines without due enquiry, or attempted to explain them without a proper attention to the merits of the caſe; who have been convicted upon evidence the moſt clear, and proofs the moſt poſitive, either of ignorance as to the exiſtence of ancient authorities, or prevarication in the uſe of them.

It would appear to be peculiarly providential, and may probably therefore enter into the very plan of divine Providence, that where things are at all capable of deciſion by ſound Criticiſm, there has never been wanting

wanting a conſtant ſucceſſion of learned men, duly qualified to controvert the many bold and dogmatical aſſertions, by which the ignorant are in conſtant danger of being confounded and miſled. If we had no power of examining into the real merit of ſuch aſſertions, we ſhould be at this moment compelled to believe, that "*the doctrines of Atonement, Incarnation, and the Trinity, have no more foundation in the Scriptures than the doctrines of tranſubſtantiation or tranſmigration*[m];" that "there are very few texts that even *ſeem* to aſſert the pre-exiſtence of Chriſt;" and that "on a full review of the religions of all nations, ancient and modern, we ſhould find them utterly deſtitute of any thing like a doctrine of proper atonement[n]." Aſſertions more completely unfounded could ſcarcely have entered into the mind of man; for in

[m] See *Prieſtley's Anſwer to Paine.* It has been well obſerved, that "the doctrines of redemption and grace appear very evidently to *deiſtical* writers to be the doctrines of the Bible, though ſome nominal Chriſtians cannot find them there." See *The Age of Infidelity*, Part I. 62. Mr. Paine could find them there, though Dr. Prieſtley could not.

[n] See note (3).

regard only to the latter, it is, in positive contradiction to what has been alleged, capable of the most certain proof, that all nations whatsoever before Christ, Heathens as well as Jews, universally held, that the displeasure of an offended Deity was to be averted by the sacrifice of an animal: nor are any of the other assertions less open to confutation, as has been amply shewn, by a learned Professor in a sister University, in a work which may well encourage us to hope, that assertions will never again be received as proofs, nor sophistry ever prevail over real learning °.

Connected with this doctrine of atonement is that most important doctrine of all, *the Trinity*. How much the *human Reason* has revolted against this doctrine, I need not say. She has thought herself competent entirely to set this aside, and to treat its defenders with the most ignominious contempt. If this doctrine had been entirely of man's invention, they might be allowed, in dissenting from it, to suspect the authors of

° *Magee's Discourses on the Scriptural Doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice.* London, 1801.

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it of ſome affectation of myſtery, and they might with the utmoſt reaſon be jealous of admitting any aſſumed equality with the ſupreme Father of heaven. But as a theological queſtion, and it cannot be any thing elſe, this alſo now admits of no *a priori* judgment. None have any right to enquire of us, whether three perſons *may* ſubſiſt in the unity of one eſſence, as a merely ſpeculative doctrine: but as they, who from the firſt have held this doctrine, have aſſerted, that they find it in the Scriptures, the whole muſt depend on the interpretation of certain paſſages there: and as the appeal is open, it is abſurd to preſume, that there is no foundation whatever for ſuch a doctrine to be diſcovered in the words of Scripture; for who could poſſibly be ſo ſenſeleſs as to ſay ſuch a doctrine was to be diſcovered there, unleſs they felt aſſured in their own minds, that the Scripture would, upon reference, be found to ſupport them? I know nothing upon the face of the earth that could firſt have induced men to ſay, they believed in one God and a Trinity of Perſons, if they regarded theſe two parts of their creed as

incompatible [p]; I know nothing that could have induced the believers in one God to worſhip Chriſt and the Holy Spirit, unleſs they believed them in ſome manner or other to be co-equal, and co-exiſtent [q].

The modern Unitarians, as they perſiſt in calling themſelves, ſtill continue to aſſert, that the *mere humanity of Chriſt* is the *clear and indiſputable doctrine of the New Teſtament* [r]. Surely then they muſt acknowledge it to be ſtrange, that ſome of thoſe, whom they moſt boaſt of, as advocates for the Unity, and adverſe to the doctrine of Chriſt's Divinity, ſhould yet have given a Trinitarian meaning to moſt of the paſſages inſiſted on; or a meaning certainly *incompatible with real manhood;* and that they ſhould have found expreſſions in the Goſpel leading them to imagine that "prayer and invoca-

[p] "If the Scripture had not told us of Three in heaven, we "had never ſpoke of a Trinity." *Leſlie.*

[q] Socinus acknowledged Chriſt to be an object of prayer, as being exalted to the dignity and majeſty of *a true God,* (*Deus verus,*) in reward of his obedience and ſufferings.

[r] See *Prieſtley's Hiſtory of Corruptions,* vol. i. p. 6.

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" tion were due to Chriſt [s];"—" that he had " a pre-exiſtence;"—" that the Divinity was " united to him, compoſing, together with " his human ſoul and body, one Chriſt;"—and that this Divinity was " the Supreme " Being:" and yet theſe, without doubt, were ſeverally the tenets of Arius, Socinus, Eraſmus, Grotius, Petavius, Epiſcopius, Sandius, Clarke, and Tucker [t]; all of whom are claimed at leaſt by the Unitarians of the preſent day, as the friends of their party ([5]). Shall we then be told, that the doctrines of Chriſt's pre-exiſtence, divinity, and incarnation, have no better foundations in Scripture, than thoſe of tranſubſtantiation and tranſmigration? When our Saviour is repreſented as expreſſing himſelf ſo before the

[s] See the extracts from the *Racovian Catechiſm* in the 1ſt vol. of *Leſlie*, p. 219.

[t] Arius's opinions are well known. Socinus *complains* of his being thought to deny Chriſt's being *a true God*; " Quaſi nos " Chriſtum *verum Deum* eſſe *negamus*, quod tamen a nobis non " ſit." *Op.* tom. ii. p. 645. See alſo *Edwards's Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm*, Diſc. I. pp. 9, 10. Eraſmus in his *Paraphraſe on John* i. 1. calls Chriſt *ex Deo vero, Deus verus*, and much more to the ſame purpoſe. For the tenets of Grotius, Petavius, Epiſcopius, and Sandius, ſee *Leſlie's IVth Dialogue of his Socinian Controverſy*: of Clarke and Tucker, ſee note (5).

whole Sanhedrim aſſembled in council [u], as that the Jews conceived he made himſelf equal with God, we may well conceive the expreſſion recorded had this direct purport; and *we* may ſurely be excuſed for thinking *the ſame*; eſpecially as our Saviour's own explanation, recorded by the ſame Evangeliſt, does not tend to convict them of an error in judgment. When he more openly declared, equally to the ſurpriſe and aſtoniſhment of the Jews, that He and the Father were ONE, and they drew the ſame inference they had done before; namely, that he had *made himſelf God*, by this declaration; is it to be conſidered as a mere random, irrational, unfounded interpretation, that *we* put upon the ſame words, eſpecially when, as in the former caſe, our Saviour did not *deny* the propriety of the inference they had drawn (6)? The queſtion has been rendered intricate by the numerous diſcuſſions it has undergone: when our Saviour ſpoke himſelf to the point, he was ſo intelligible to the Jews, that they would have ſtoned him for blaſphemy. This makes the queſtion of

[u] See *Doddridge on John* v. 17. *Family Expoſitor*, ſect. 47.

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the Trinity a moſt awful and important one; for the denial of it evidently tends to fix the charge of blaſphemy on Chriſt. And this conſideration ſhould be uppermoſt in the minds of all thoſe who engage in ſuch enquiries.

Let them not fancy they are under any obligation to *explain* the Trinity, but under the deepeſt and moſt indiſpenſable obligation to conſider the true extent of our Saviour's meaning, when he claimed, in the preſence of the Jews, this unity with the Father. Let them not ſuffer themſelves to be led too far in the inveſtigation of this moſt important queſtion. Thoſe who will ſtill inſiſt upon its being a contradiction, to acknowledge a Trinity in unity, muſt be contented with the anſwer provided for us in the Creed which goes by the name of Athanaſius. *That* was written, whoever was the author, with a far better deſign than is generally imputed to it: it was in all likelihood intended not only to meet particular hereſies and errors, but to *repel the charge of Tritheiſm*, alleged againſt the true believers. It was drawn up, no doubt, to ſhew, that they, who, *in their acknowledgement of Father*,

ther, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, either confounded the perſons, or divided the ſubſtance, differed eſſentially from the true believers; and therefore that the latter of courſe were not obnoxious to any ſuch charges: and as both theſe errors gave a handle to unbelievers, to accuſe them of ſuch "damnable "hereſies," (to uſe St. Peter's own terms,) as either the denying the Lord that bought them, or of giving way to idolatry, the damnatory clauſes, as they are called, whatever was their original object, muſt be held to expreſs the horror with which ſuch errors were viewed by the true believer, and the extreme danger of them. Theſe may ſtill therefore ſerve to ſhew, that the Trinitarians, in acknowledging the Divinity of Chriſt, think their doctrine groſsly miſrepreſented, whenever it is ſo ſtated as to imply any thing contrary to the divine Unity; any thing bordering upon idolatry on the one hand, or a denial of Chriſt on the other (7): charges continually brought againſt them, and in terms that ſhould preclude all further argument, if they were but true. For if there are really any perſons capable of aſſerting, as it has been more than once alleged, that

that " there are *three Creators*, and yet but " *one Creator*[x]," ſuch men need never be argued with; the proof of ſuch an aſſertion would be entirely ſufficient to preclude all reaſoning upon the ſubject (8). But after having ſaid, as the Creed alluded to does ſay, "that " the *Godhead* of the Father, of the Son, " and of the Holy Ghoſt, is One;" to affirm further, that " the Father is God, the Son is " God, and the Holy Ghoſt is God," is only to expreſs the ſame thing differently, which it is a matter of abſolute neceſſity to do, where we are at all obliged to ſhew, in what manner we believe *three to agree in one.* We have been forced, in this and many other inſtances, into a ſort of *a priori* reaſoning concerning the nature and moral government of God; which, if left to herſelf, the Church would always with humility decline[y]: " For," as a very able writer obſerves

[x] *Lindſey on the Two Creations*, in the 2d vol. of the *Theological Repoſitory*.

[y] Ὅτι μὲν ὁ Θεὸς υἱὸν ἔχει, τοῦτο πίστευε· τὸ δὲ πῶς, μὴ πολυπραγμόνει· ζητῶν γὰρ οὐχ εὑρήσεις. *Cyrill. Hieroſ.* Catech. xi.

Πῶς γεννᾷ τὸν υἱὸν ὁ Θεὸς, ἀ πολυπραγμονῶ. Καὶ πῶς ἐκπέμπει τὸ πνεῦμα ὁμοίως οὐ πολυπραγμονῶ· ἀλλὰ πιστεύω ὅτι καὶ υἱὸς γεννᾶται ἀῤῥήτως καὶ ἀπαθῶς, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ἐκπορεύεται ἀῤῥήτως καὶ ἀπαθῶς. *Athanaſii Dial. I.* edit. p. 40. Stephan.

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on another occaſion, " what God could or " could not have done it preſumes not to " pronounce; what God declares he *has* " done, that merely it aſſerts; and on his " expreſs word alone it is founded. But it " is to be remembered," he proceeds to remark, " that on this, and on many other " occaſions, that *a priori* reaſoning, which ſo " frequently miſleads thoſe who object to " the doctrines of our Church, is imputed " by *them* to *us*. Not being themſelves in " the habit of bowing with humble reve- " rence to the ſacred word, they conſider " not that we ſpeak *merely its ſuggeſtions*; " and that, if we do at any time philoſo- " phize, it is but to *follow*, not to *lead*, the " meaning of Scripture." And this was the intention, no doubt, of the ancient Fathers of the Church, whoſe illuſtrations of their doctrine have been lately ſo officiouſly brought forward to prove[z], not the inſufficiency of human Reaſon to explain a divine myſtery, but that a divine myſtery incapable of being adequately explained, and accounted for by human Reaſon, is

[z] See *Prieſtley's Early Opinions concerning Chriſt.*

therefore

therefore impoſſible: a concluſion which has been ſo often and ſo effectually refuted, as no longer to deſerve our notice. The ancient Fathers never meant to inform us what the Trinity really was [a], but only how it might in ſome degree be illuſtrated; and, for this end, they certainly diſcovered many ſimilitudes, which, though not ſtrictly applicable, were ſufficient to ſhew, that a Triune ſubſiſtence was not, in the nature of things, either an abſurdity or an impoſſibility [b].

As theſe Fathers of the Chriſtian Church were frequently accuſed of having formed their notions of the Trinity on the model of the Platonic Triad of principles; ſo, from what has ſince been diſcovered of a Trinity

[a] Εἷς Θεὸς Πατὴρ, εἷς Κύριος, ὁ μονογενὴς αὐτῷ Υἱὸς, ἓν τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ὁ παράκλητος. Καὶ αὔταρκες ἡμῖν εἰδέναι ταῦτα· φύσιν δὲ, ἣ ὑπόστασιν μὴ πολυπραγμόνει· εἰ γὰρ ἦν γεγραμμένον, ἐλέγομεν· ἃ γέγραπται, μὴ τολμήσωμεν· αὔταρκες ἡμῖν εἰδέναι πρὸς σωτηρίαν, ὅτι ἐστὶ Πατὴρ, καὶ Υἱὸς, καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα. *Cyrill. Hieroſ.* Catech. xvi.

[b] See *Huntingford on the Trinity*, §. xv. Biſhop Beveridge is cenſured for ſuch ſimilitudes, in *Robinſon's Notes to Claude's Eſſay*, vol. i. p. 17. but I think without reaſon. Though all ſuch illuſtrations muſt be inadequate, as the Biſhop of Glouceſter obſerves, yet there is no harm in ſhewing, that in nature, and in human caſes, unity and multiplicity may be combined, and often are ſo.

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in the Oriental mythologies, ſome have been of late induced, perverſely enough, to think, and *to aſſert* indeed, that we derive the doctrine entirely from thence; and, as I had occaſion to obſerve before, that the Hindu and Chriſtian Trinities are identical, and equally fabulous. We cannot be too particular therefore in ſatisfying ourſelves, that the Trinity *is* the doctrine of the *New Teſtament*, prior to all other conſiderations [c]. Thoſe that have no veneration for the character of our bleſſed Lord, muſt be left to their own notions: but even among Infidels, it muſt be confeſſed, that *many* have been found to bear the moſt willing and the ſtrongeſt teſtimony to the purity and perfection, both of his life and doctrine, as repreſented in the Goſpel [d]. Now it is principally from our Saviour's own declarations and conduct, that we deduce the doctrine of the Trinity: we know that he fell under the imputation of blaſphemy for aſſuming

[c] How much the *Platonic* Trinity differs from the Chriſtian, ſee *Biſhop Burgeſs's Sermon on the Divinity of Chriſt.*

[d] Mr. Paine profeſſes the higheſt reſpect for the character of Jeſus Chriſt. Rouſſeau's ſketch of it, in his *Letter to the Archbiſhop of Paris*, is very ſtriking and very juſt.

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an equality with God, and that he did not repel the charge by any objections made to the interpretation put on his words; ſo that our notions of the Divinity of Chriſt are not founded on any ſuch viſionary baſis as a mythological legend, or philoſophical ſpeculation, but admit of proof from his own perſonal declarations, atteſted and interpreted by living witneſſes. It cannot in any manner be pretended, that the Grecian or Oriental Trinities admit of any proof ſo certain and direct. And as a *previous* queſtion, I cannot ſee that we have any thing to do with any traces of a Trinity, that may be diſcoverable either among Jews or Pagans. After having commenced our enquiries with our Lord's own declarations, his own claim to a filial identity of nature with God the Father, and having diſcovered in the courſe of our reſearches, that however the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles have deſcribed him as a man, and the Prophets foretold him as ſuch, they yet alſo all agree in aſcribing to him the brighteſt characters of Divinity; after having taken into the account the peculiar form of baptiſm of our Lord's own inſtitution; then we may be well entitled

to

to regard every other intimation of ſuch a mode of ſubſiſtence in the Deity, either among Jews or Pagans, but eſpecially the former, as a remarkable confirmation of the Chriſtian Trinity.

Whatever faint or imperfect revelations of it God might have vouchſafed from the firſt creation, we are to look chiefly to the New Teſtament for an account of the perſon and character of the Saviour of the world; and ſuppoſing the Trinity true, the fulleſt diſcovery of it might moſt fitly be reſerved for the times of the Goſpel: then it became as eſſential for man to know God's method of redemption and ſanctification, as under the Law it had been of importance to him to have a revelation of his method of creation and providence. God foreſeeing the need of ſuch further diſcoveries in time, might well vouchſafe ſome intimation of ſuch a mode of ſubſiſtence from the earlieſt times, as it would certainly appear that he had done [e]. So that in all likelihood, as has been conjectured

[e] See *Cudworth*, b. i. ch. 5. *Horſley's Tracts*, 40—45. and his *ſecond Letter to Dr. Prieſtley*, p. 100. See alſo *Leland's View of Deiſtical Writers*, Letter xxxiii. and *Biſhop Huntingford on the Trinity*, §§. xvi. xxv. xxviii.

and

and aſſerted, revelation and tradition were indeed the original ſources whence both Jew and Gentile, both the philoſophers of the Weſt, and the mythologiſts of the Eaſt, derived whatever notions they appear to have had of a Trinity in Unity.

MAY THE ALMIGHTY AND EVERLASTING GOD, WHO HAS GIVEN US GRACE IN THE CONFESSION OF OUR FAITH, TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE GLORY OF THE ETERNAL TRINITY, AND IN THE POWER OF THE DIVINE MAJESTY TO WORSHIP THE UNITY, KEEP US STEDFAST IN THIS FAITH, AND EVERMORE DEFEND US FROM ALL ADVERSITIES!

NOTES TO SERMON VII.

Page 356. *note* (1).

THE author of the Age of Reaſon has ventured to aſſure the world, that only living languages are of uſe in the advancement of knowledge.] To do Mr. Paine juſtice, he has not ſaid this without ſtating his reaſons; which are, "that there is now nothing new to be learned "from the dead languages: all the uſeful books being "already tranſlated, the languages are become uſeleſs, "and the time expended in teaching and learning them "is waſted." Part I. of the *Age of Reaſon*, p. 37. But then, to do *ourſelves* juſtice, we muſt not truſt Mr. Paine too far, when he aſſerts, that human language may never be the "*vehicle of the word of God*," becauſe of "the continually progreſſive change, to which "the meaning of words is ſubject; the want of an "univerſal language, which renders tranſlation neceſ-"ſary; the errors to which tranſlations are again ſub-"ject; the miſtakes of copyiſts and printers; together "with the poſſibility of wilful alteration, &c." *Ib.* p. 19. If tranſlations have been capable of conveying to us all that is uſeful in the writings of antiquity in ſo great perfection, as to render the ſtudy of the original writings altogether uſeleſs, then we may certainly be ſaid to have the benefits of ſuch an univerſal language as Mr. Paine thinks indiſpenſably neceſſary to a divine Revelation: but if tranſlations are ſo liable to error as he ſuppoſes, and copyiſts and printers ſubject to miſtake, and the originals always in danger of wilful alterations, what can poſſibly ſecure us from ſuch evils, but a critical knowledge of the original languages, and original works, wherewith we may compare the tranſlations, and whereby we may be able to correct the

miſtakes of copyiſts and printers, and to detect and expoſe all wilful alterations?

What an able critic Mr. Paine became, by truſting to tranſlations, and neglecting the uſe and ſtudy of the dead languages, we may judge from his arguments about the book of Job. It is impoſſible to expreſs the *courſe* of his *diſcoveries in Criticiſm* better than in the following few words of a very able writer who anſwered him; and who thus ſums up his arguments: "The book of Job is a *Hebrew* tranſlation from an *A-*"*rabic* original; becauſe the *Engliſh* tranſlation con-"tains four or five *Greek* words." See *Age of Infidelity*, Part II. 41. This is literally Mr. Paine's argument. After adopting the opinions of *Aben-Ezra* and *Spinoſa*, that it is a tranſlation into Hebrew from another language, he adds, "the aſtronomical names, *Pleïades*, "*Orion*, and *Arcturus*, are Greek, and not Hebrew "names; and as it does not appear from any thing "that is to be found in the Bible, that the Jews knew "any thing of aſtronomy, or that they ſtudied it, *they* "*had no tranſlation for thoſe names into their own lan-*"*guage*; but adopted the names as they found them "in the poem." The Engliſh reader, who may have neglected the ſtudy of the dead languages upon the wiſe advice of Mr. Paine, (but indeed I hope he will have found very few ſuch readers,) would be ſurpriſed to learn, that, ſo far from the Hebrews having been unable to tranſlate theſe *Greek* names, the Greeks have appeared to be much more unable to tranſlate the Hebrew. For let the real ſignification, or the derivation of the terms in Job be what they may, there they certainly are, in the original, in true Hebrew characters, Job ix. 9. כימה, כסיל, עש — and not one word do we read of either the *Pleïades*, *Orion*, or *Arcturus*; though in Mr. Paine's *Engliſh Bible* (for when he wrote the ſecond part of the *Age of Reaſon* he had one, and *not before*) no doubt he found the names as he writes them. But whoever was the author of the *Greek* verſion of the book of Job, he certainly knew ſo little which particular conſtellations were meant, that in the two paſſages where they are mentioned, he renders עש in the firſt by Πλειάδα, but in the ſecond by Ἑσπέρον: and the author of the Greek verſion of Amos, (ch. v. ver. 8.)

ver. 8.) where two of the ſame conſtellations are again mentioned in the original, fairly leaves them out; as if he totally wanted ſome correſpondent Greek terms. Nor indeed is the author of the Vulgate more uniform than the author of the Greek verſion, as to עש: he has *Arcturum* in the firſt inſtance, and *Veſperum* in the laſt: and as to the term כימה, he renders it differently in three different places. Mr. Paine's favourite commentator Aben-Ezra allowed no place at all for the Pleïades, but was for ſubſtituting the Hyades in their ſtead; another cluſter of ſtars in the Bull. This is more upon the ſubject, perhaps, than the caſe required; though Mr. Paine's object was no leſs than, by this rare piece of criticiſm, to rob the Bible of the book of Job; and merely for this reaſon; that he thought it too good to be in ſuch company. In his opinion it is deiſtical; but how Job himſelf could be accounted a Deiſt I know not, who was "*continually*" making ſin-offerings for his family, leſt ſome of his many "*ſons ſhould have ſin-*"*ned in their hearts*;" which certainly favours a good deal of an inſtituted method of atonement. Job i. 5. and xlii. 7. 8. See *Magee's ſecond Sermon on Atonement*, and Note 23. p. 136. I ſhall advert to one more criticiſm of Mr. Paine's, ſuggeſted by another ſhort remark of the ſame able writer already referred to.

Mr. Paine inſiſts upon it, in the ſecond part of the *Age of Reaſon*, p. 6. that Moſes cannot be conſidered as the author of the Pentateuch, without rendering him truly ridiculous and abſurd: for in the xiith chapter of Numbers, ver. 3. it is ſaid, "Now the man Mo-"ſes was very *meek* above all the men which were on "the face of the earth." "If Moſes ſaid this of him-"ſelf," ſays Mr. Paine, "inſtead of being the meekeſt "of men, he was one of the moſt vain and arrogant of "coxcombs." This is an old objection, *as indeed all Mr. Paine's are, without exception.* Now the author of the *Age of Infidelity* ſuggeſts, from the origin of the term ענו, that this meekneſs of Moſes was not ſo much a virtue as a weakneſs; and I muſt confeſs I think he is right: and though a dead language is here of uſe to illuſtrate the point, yet I think our own *living* language would ſupply an eaſy argument againſt Mr. Paine. There can be no doubt, from the context, that

the meekneſs here attributed to Moſes had a reference to the reſentment of wrongs. Now in the claſſification of the paſſions, ſome are allowed to be purely defenſive, and deſigned for the ſecurity of the individual. On opening then the firſt book of morals that falls in my way, I read, that "if theſe paſſions are ſo weak as "to prove inſufficient for their end, as well as if they "are ſo ſtrong as to carry us beyond it, in both caſes "they are unfit to anſwer their original deſign; and "therefore are in an unſound and unnatural ſtate." See *Profeſſor Ferguſon's Elements of Moral Philoſophy*. I apprehend therefore, that the meekneſs of Moſes would in this particular inſtance rather imply that diffidence, which is oppoſed, not ſo much to haughtineſs and pride, as to that reſentment of injuries, which is ſometimes both becoming and neceſſary. And if we conſult the whole paſſage, we ſhall, I think, certainly conclude, that the interpoſition of the Deity upon the occaſion was expreſsly connected with the *weakneſs* and *unreaſonable* diffidence of his Prophet. See verſes 4 and 14. It is thus that Cicero, where he recommends clemency, *meekneſs*, and gentleneſs of ſpirit, as virtues becoming a ſtateſman, is particularly careful to add, that though meekneſs and clemency be laudable virtues, yet no further than as they leave room for a juſt ſeverity, whenever the occaſions of the public require it. "*Et tamen ita probanda eſt manſuetudo et clementia, ut* "*adhibeatur, reipublicæ cauſa*, ſeveritas, *ſine qua admi-* "*niſtrari civitas non poteſt.*" De Officiis, lib. i. c. 25. Upon which Grævius has a note very applicable to the caſe of Moſes. And Muretus has a good remark: "Ut "moroſitas odium, ita *nimia facilitas* contemtum pa-"rit." See Verburgius's edit. Note 70. p. 3489.

I do not mean to deny, that meekneſs is allied to many virtues, and to ſome particularly conſpicuous in the character of Moſes; but in the paſſage alluded to, though without reference to the Hebrew it would ſeem as if an act of weakneſs had been moſt in the contemplation of the writer; yet a knowledge of the original muſt be neceſſary to determine this.

So far then from agreeing with Mr. Paine in the concluſion he draws, and which he has expreſſed ſo ſmartly in the following words; "The author is with-

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"out credit, becauſe, to boaſt of meekneſs is the re-
"verſe of meekneſs, and is a lie in ſentiment;" *I* ſhould argue, that to acknowledge a *weakneſs* is a *virtue*, and therefore Moſes was meek both in the good and bad ſenſe of the term; and in this particular inſtance, perhaps, ſuperlatively ſo. For what was the real caſe? Aaron and Miriam were diſputing his *divine miſſion*; of which if Moſes had been duly ſenſible, he ſhould have ſuffered no private affections to incline him to compromiſe ſo great an inſult to the *prophet of God*: but though he was therefore blameworthy, for ſuch an ill-judged lenity and diffidence, and even thereby as it were confederate with Aaron and Miriam, as verſes 4 and 14 would imply; yet, conſidering the near relationſhip of the offenders to him, it was certainly an amiable weakneſs, and, had not the honour of God, and the future authority of *his Prophet*, been ſo immediately concerned, no doubt a *venial* one. After all, it is in a *parentheſis*, and therefore might poſſibly have been added by way of note, ſuch having been conjectured to have been the original way of writing notes; ſee *Age of Infidelity*, p. 17: and if ſo, whether it were a virtue or a weakneſs, Moſes would have nothing to do with it.

In neither of the caſes above can we ſay, that we have been *miſled* by the tranſlators. If they have miſtaken the particular conſtellations alluded to in the firſt caſe, it is of no ſort of moment; for if they were conſtellations, (which is not generally admitted, ſee *Parkhurſt* under עי II. and *Bates's Crit. Heb.*) whether Hebrew, Arabic, Grecian, or Engliſh, they are only mentioned to ſet forth the glory of God. In the laſt caſe, whatever idea we attach to the term meekneſs, we cannot be wrong in ſuppoſing it to have been a particular trait in the character of Moſes: but as it certainly admits of two ſenſes, or at leaſt the virtue carried to exceſs may become a weakneſs, like many others, we cannot pretend to determine that Moſes meant to *boaſt*, even if he himſelf was the very author of the words.

But where tranſlators may not miſlead, *interpreters* may; and if the dead languages, Learning, and Criticiſm were to be given up, I am confident we ſhould

ſoon know as little of the word of *man*, in times paſt, as of the word of God. For let us ſuppoſe the Bible to be only an ancient book, but to contain things uſeful; and let us further imagine Mr. Paine to be perſuaded, that the Engliſh tranſlation was ſufficient to communicate to him all that it was neceſſary for him to know of the Bible, and therefore that the Hebrew might be laid aſide: now without dreaming of any ſuch arguments and objections as Mr. Paine might in time to come chooſe to invent, the tranſlators might reaſonably have ſubſtituted the modern names of the moſt conſpicuous conſtellations, for the three unintelligible terms, (for they are ſo in a great meaſure,) which occur in the original paſſages of the book of Job.

But how would Mr. Paine himſelf be confounded, (at leaſt one would think it impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe,) if, pretending to criticiſe the Bible, and to advance objections, which, according to his own expreſſions, "no Bible believer, though writing at his "eaſe, and with a library of church books about him, "ſhould be able to refute," (ſee the Preface to the ſecond part of the *Age of Reaſon*,) he ſhould, relying upon the tranſlation, inſiſt upon a difficulty in the Hebrew original, from which it ſhould be found, upon examination, the Hebrew original was totally free?

If tranſlations are ſo correct as entirely to ſuperſede the uſe and ſtudy of the dead languages, which is what Mr. Paine inſiſts upon in one place, then ſuch tranſlations ſhould be implicitly relied on: but if tranſlations are liable to be ſo faulty and erroneous, as he alſo ſtrongly inſiſts in another place, then no arguments ſhould be deduced from them, but ſuch as the originals would ſerve to ſupport, as well as the tranſlations. Mr. Paine confeſſes his own ignorance of the Hebrew language, (p. 54. Part II. of the *Age of Reaſon*,) and yet pretends to inſtruct us in the uſe of Hebrew terms; ſo much ſo, that in endeavouring to deprive us of all faith in the Hebrew Prophets, after inſiſting upon it, that a Prophet, a Poet, and a Muſician, were ſynonimous, when he undertakes to determine the meaning and import of the *older* term SEER, for want of *Hebrew*, he fairly refers us from the *Engliſh* to the *French*: intimating pretty plainly, that he conceives it to have ſignified

ſignified no more than a wizard; though in the Hebrew there is a diſtinct term for the latter, and they are particularly enumerated (Deut. xviii. 10, 11.) among the *abominations of the heathens*. This is the more particular, becauſe he pretends alſo, that the Jewiſh Prophets were not raiſed to a higher rank than that of wizards, but through the fraud of the *Chriſtian* Church, and the ignorance and ſuperſtition of *modern* times: whereas nothing can be more diſtinguiſhed, in the Old Teſtament, than the Prophets of God, and the wizards of the Gentiles. For in the ſame chapter of Deuteronomy already referred to, where wizards are denounced as among the heathen abominations, puniſhments are awarded to thoſe who will not liſten to and obey the Prophets of God. Nay, would he but have condeſcended to let the Bible ſpeak for itſelf, which he never does, he would alſo have found, from the *ſame* chapter, that it was expreſsly to reſtrain the Jews from following after wizards and necromancers, and ſuch ſort of "conjuring, ſtrolling gentry," that the prophetical office was firſt eſtabliſhed: upon which head Origen argues admirably againſt Celſus, that it was a matter of abſolute neceſſity that they ſhould have Prophets; "For," ſaith he, "it being written in their law, that "the Gentiles hearkened unto *oracles* and *divinations*, "but God would not ſuffer it to be ſo among them, "it preſently follows, Deut. xviii. 15. *A* Prophet *will* "*the* Lord *thy* God *raiſe up from the midſt of thee*, &c. "Therefore," ſays Origen, "when the nations round "about them had their oracles and ſeveral ways of di- "vination, (εἴτε διὰ κληδόνων, εἴτε δι' οἰωνῶν, εἴτε δι' ὀρνίθων, "εἴτε δι' ἐγγαστριμύθων, εἴτε καὶ διὰ τῶν τὴν θυτικὴν ἀπαγγελ- "λομένων, εἴτε καὶ διὰ Χαλδαίων γενεθλιαλογούντων,) all "which were ſtrictly prohibited among the Jews; if "the Jews had had no way of foreknowing things to "come, it had been almoſt impoſſible, conſidering the "great curioſity of human nature, to have kept them "from deſpiſing the Law of Moſes, and apoſtatizing to "the heathen oracles, or ſetting up ſomething like "them among themſelves." *Contra Celſ.* lib. i. p. 28. edit. Cantab. See alſo Notes to Sermon V.

Mr. Paine tells us, indeed, that neither Seer nor Prophet ventured to meddle with any concerns, but thoſe of

of the times then paſſing; and that their prophecyings had never any reference to any *diſtant future* time. This is eaſily ſaid by Mr. Paine, and, according to his mode of *Criticiſm*, eaſily proved. The very remarkable prophecy of Iſaiah concerning Cyrus is divided between the xlivth and xlvth chapters, as is well known. In the former part the rebuilding of Jeruſalem only is mentioned; in the latter the conqueſts of Cyrus are foretold; and the circumſtance of his being named in the prophecy ſo many years before its accompliſhment, is expreſsly mentioned as the pledge of its truth. All this latter part Mr. Paine totally paſſes over; and, from the laſt verſe of the xlivth chapter, takes occaſion to declaim againſt "the audacity of the *Church*, and *prieſt-ly ignorance*," for impoſing this book upon the world as the writing of Iſaiah; when, by their own chronology, he died one hundred and ſixty-two years before the decree of Cyrus for the rebuilding of Jeruſalem was iſſued. Indeed, we muſt acknowledge, that ſuch ignorance and audacity would have exceeded every thing of the kind that we have ſince read of in the annals of the world. But Mr. Paine regards the decree of Cyrus as authentic. Now Cyrus was certainly neither an audacious churchman, nor an ignorant prieſt; he was the very perſon concerned; and by all accounts, (and it happens that we know a great deal of Cyrus from *profane* hiſtory,) he was too ſhrewd to be eaſily impoſed on, and too great to impoſe upon others; nor was there a motive to induce him to do ſo in this inſtance. Cyrus himſelf then, in the very proclamation he iſſued upon the occaſion, expreſsly acknowledges his ſenſe of the truth of this prophecy, and adopts it as the motive for his clemency and indulgence to the Jews. See Ezra i. 2. See alſo *Joſephus*, *Ant. Jud.* lib. xi. c. 1. "He cauſed it to be proclaimed," ſays Joſephus, "*throughout all Aſia*, ὅτι ΚΥΡΟΣ Ο ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΛΕΓΕΙ· "—ἐπεί με ὁ Θεὸς ὁ μέγιστος τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀπέδειξε βασιλέα, "πείθομαι τάττον εἶναι ὃν τὸ τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν ἔθνος προσκυνεῖ· καὶ "γὰρ ΤΟΥΤΜΟΝ ΠΡΟΕΙΠΕΝ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΦΗ-"ΤΩΝ, καὶ ὅτι τὸν ναὸν αὐτῷ οἰκοδομήσω ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἐν τῇ "Ἰουδαίᾳ χώρᾳ." This, ſays Joſephus, he learnt from the writings of Iſaiah, which had already been extant 210 years, 140 *before the temple was deſtroyed*; another material

material circumſtance, which Mr. Paine totally omits. Indeed if dead languages are no longer of any uſe, living languages are as little ſo, while they are liable to be ſo groſsly perverted, and ſo ſhamefully abuſed.

Page 359. *note* (2).

Nor would it be difficult to ſhew at length, as a proof particularly applicable, that the very writer in queſtion has much aggravated a very futile charge, which he has advanced againſt the divine authority of the Bible, by the unwarrantable inſertion or miſconſtruction of one of the very letters he mentions.] I do not deſign to make this a very ſerious point of criticiſm; for by ſome perhaps it may be thought to be no better than quibbling; M. de Voltaire's remark, beſides, having too much of levity in it to be treated with great attention. But as his deſign was, like Mr. Paine's, to invalidate in every way poſſible the authority of the Pentateuch, it way be well to ſhew, that ſuch flippancies are inimical to truth, and that the unwary and the ignorant may be groſsly deceived by them. We ſhall not, ſays M. Voltaire, be queſtioned, in the day of judgment, whether we have miſtaken a *Caph* for a *Beth*, or a *Yod* for a *Vau*. Let M. Voltaire then be more correct in his charges *againſt the Bible*; becauſe, if it is quite a trifle to miſtake one Hebrew Letter for another, the truth is more in danger of being perverted by ſuch critics, than by all the prieſthood, either of the Synagogue or the Church. M. de Voltaire has a long argument upon the *twenty-three thouſand* men that fell by the hand of the children of Levi, in the caſe of the molten calf, Exodus xxxii. 28. M. Voltaire underſtood nothing of Hebrew; how much Greek he knew I cannot pretend to ſay: but it is certain, that, like a true catholic, he deſcended as low as Latin at leaſt for the text of his argument: for in the Vulgate tranſlation of the Bible, and the Vulgate only, (if we except the Arabic, which is not regarded of much authority; ſee *Whitby*,) the number of perſons is really as he ſtates, viz. 23,000; though in ſome copies it is more, even 33,000: but in the Greek verſion it is only εἰς τριακιλιάδας ἀνδρας, *about three* thouſand, as *our* verſion alſo has it. And this is in agreement with the Hebrew, בשלשת אלפי איש; only, unfortunately for M. Voltaire,

taire, ſomewhere or other there has happened a miſtake about a *Caph*. The numeral power of this Hebrew letter is well known to be 20, ſo that here ſeems to be undoubtedly either an unwarrantable inſertion, or a miſconſtruction of a ב, as I have ſtated in the Diſcourſe, on which the *credit of the Bible* is made to depend. It is certain there is a כ in the original; but it is not a numerical, according to the ableſt judges, but an adverbial prefix, anſwering exactly to the Latin term *circiter*, and which has been carefully preſerved in the other verſions of the Bible. I hope this will not appear trifling, when we have to do with ſuch trifling critics. Had M. Voltaire been ever ſo little acquainted with Hebrew, and felt a real concern for the truth, inſtead of making us indifferent about ſuch miſtakes, he ſhould have cautioned us againſt them; for it is notorious, that ſuch miſtakes are eaſy, from the great ſimilarity of the letters; and whether the Bible be true or not, if M. de Voltaire thought it of importance to the world, that its credit ſhould be impeached, he muſt be held to have acknowledged the uſe and importance of Criticiſm, even while he was abuſing it, and turning it into ridicule.

M. de Voltaire was a bad or a very diſingenuous critic in Latin, as well as Hebrew. In order to prove that the Jews were not the only people acquainted with the unity of God, he adduces the following line from Virgil, to ſhew that the heathens alſo worſhipped *one* God, viz. Jupiter.

Diſcite juſtitiam moniti, et non temnere *Divos*.

A Latin ſcholar muſt ſee that this line expreſsly aſſerts a *plurality* of *Gods:* but a plain Engliſhman would know nothing about it; nor yet a plain Frenchman; and therefore, in ſupport of his argument, M. Voltaire makes no ſcruple to tranſlate it,

Soyez juſtes, mortels, et ne craignez qu'*un Dieu!*

Surely, for the vindication of truth, the ſecurity of man, and even the honour of God, a critical knowledge of the *dead* languages was never more neceſſary. Biſhop Warburton has noticed M. de Voltaire's great ignorance, in the 6th ſection of his fourth book of the *Divine Legation of Moſes*, note (t): an ignorance always inex-

inexcuſable in a perſon who pretends to tell the world ſo much, as he pretends to tell us in his writings, about the Hebrews, and Arabians, and Greeks, and Romans.

But it is not only for the purpoſe of detecting the fallacies and ignorant aſſertions of ſuch writers as Mr. Paine and Voltaire, that Learning and Criticiſm are neceſſary: much greater ſcholars have deſcended to ſuch low arts, as they ought certainly to be aſhamed of. I bluſh for the frequent miſrepreſentations and prevarications, and *tricks* of ſuch a writer as Mr. Gibbon: he has even condeſcended, as it would appear, to adopt the very miſrepreſentations of Voltaire; where he endeavours to diſgrace Marcellus as the encourager of mutiny and ſedition, becauſe he would not be a ſoldier, on the *intolerant terms of worſhipping the heathen idols*. Mr. Gibbon refers to *Ruinart's Acts of the Martyrs*, and Voltaire exactly agrees in miſrepreſenting the matter. Marcellus's own ſpeech, as related in the *Acts of the Martyrs*, is exceedingly fine. Another inſtance of Mr. Gibbon's *artifice* (for it really is no leſs) is to be found in his account of the number of Chriſtians at Antioch. To take their *number as low as poſſible*, he appeals to *Chryſoſtom*, to ſhew that they amounted to only one hundred thouſand perſons: "while," ſays he, "it is at "the ſame time admitted, that the whole number of "its inhabitants was not leſs than half a million." The paſſage from Chryſoſtom referred to he acknowledges he adopted from Dr. Lardner: *the amount of the population* from *John Malela*. Now it is curious, that in the ſame page from which Mr. Gibbon confeſſes he borrowed Chryſoſtom's account of the number of Chriſtians, *his account alſo* of the *population* is to be found, amounting *only to two hundred thouſand*. But, inſtead of taking St. Chryſoſtom's calculation in this *laſt* particular, he *prefers* John Malela's; an author, of whom, on *another occaſion*, he is pleaſed to ſay, "the "authority of that ignorant Greek is very ſlight." See the *Abbé Nonnette's Erreurs de Voltaire*, and *Chelſum's Remarks*, 3d edit.

It cannot but be regarded as a curious circumſtance in the hiſtory of this age of Reaſon, that two of the ableſt Sceptics it has to boaſt of ſhould have been advocates

vocates for the exploded ſyſtem of Pagan mythology: I mean Mr. Gibbon and Mr. Hume: the latter a profeſſed admirer, (ſee his *Natural Hiſtory of Religion*,) the former a ready apologiſt. I do not pretend to reconcile inconſiſtencies; I know Mr. Gibbon in one place commends the ſuperior intelligence of thoſe "wiſeſt of "the heathen," whoſe "ſecret contempt penetrated "through the thin and aukward diſguiſe of their po-"pular religion." *Decline and Fall*, ch. xv. But then, in another place, he ſpeaks almoſt in raptures of the "elegance" of their mythology; "the gaiety, cheer-"fulneſs, and ſplendour" of their feſtivals; and the liberality with which they admitted foreign Deities and foreign rites, and which of courſe he admires as the extreme of toleration. But his partiality for the vain, fantaſtical, and often impious ceremonies of Paganiſm is by no means the greateſt diſgrace, which Mr. Gibbon has brought on this age of Reaſon. In his *Strictures on the Conduct of the Primitive Fathers of the Church*, he has tacitly recommended and approved ſuch a baſe and unmanly ſubmiſſion of Reaſon, as is truly diſguſting: and if other Deiſts have a juſt regard for the honour and privileges of human Reaſon, as they pretend, Mr. Gibbon ought to rank very low in their eſtimation. I am truly aſhamed when I read his laboured vindications of Pagan toleration, accompanied with the moſt inſidious repreſentations of the commendable, upright, honeſt, and honourable reſiſtance, which the primitive Chriſtians made to all the fooleries and abſurdities of idolatry: a reſiſtance the more to be admired, when contraſted with the mean compliance of thoſe "wiſeſt of the heathens," who, "*when they knew God*," as Mr. Gibbon pretends, "*glorified him not as God*;" who "*profeſſing to be wiſe became fools*;"—"*who* "*changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an* "*image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to* "*four-footed beaſts, and creeping things*;"—"*who changed* "*the truth of God*" (if they really had a due apprehenſion of it, as Mr. Gibbon inſiſts) "*into a lie, and wor-*"*ſhipped and ſerved the creature more than the* CREATOR, "*who is bleſſed for ever. Amen.*" A reſiſtance the more manly and creditable, the more apparently trifling were thoſe acts of ſubmiſſion, which might have *ſaved their lives*,

lives, at the expence of their veracity, their faith, and their integrity. "An *eaſy pardon*," ſays Mr. Gibbon, "was granted to *repentance*; and if they conſented to "caſt *a few grains of incenſe upon the altar*, they were "diſmiſſed from the tribunal with ſafety and applauſe." —An eaſy *pardon* granted to *repentance!*—Repentance? For what? For worſhipping and adoring the true God, in preference to ſtocks and ſtones; murderers, adulterers, and tyrants? "A few grains of incenſe?" Incenſe! to whom? to *Jupiter*, *Mars*, *Venus*, and a whole rabble of ſuch Gods and Goddeſſes!—"Diſmiſſed with "applauſe!"—human, popular, vulgar applauſe! inſtead of—the approbation of an all-ſeeing God—the ſatisfaction of their own conſciences—the conſent of their own reaſon—the admiration of every honourable and honeſt man! Hear one of theſe very martyrs deſcribe their conduct, and the motives by which they were governed; and which Mr. Gibbon is pleaſed to repreſent as obſtinacy and folly;—"Ἐξελαζόμενοι, ἐκ ἀρ- "νέμεθα, διὰ τὸ συνεπίσασθαι ἑαυτοῖς μηδὲν φαῦλον, ἀσεβὲς δὲ "ἡγεμένοι ΜΗ ΚΑΤΑ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΑΛΗΘΕΥΕΙΝ, ὁ καὶ ΦΙΛΟΝ "ΤΩ ΘΕΩ γινώσκομεν." *Juſt. Mart. Apol.* 1. But indeed it is but too evident, that Mr. Gibbon muſt have yielded to ſome very diſgraceful prejudices, when he cenſured, as he has done, the noble fortitude of the firſt Chriſtian martyrs. Upon occaſion he could ſee the foul crime of diſſimulation in as hateful a light as ourſelves: for though he could juſtify the conduct of the Pagan philoſophers for their conformity to a ſyſtem of religion, which in their hearts they deſpiſed; and cenſure the behaviour of the martyrs, as obſtinate and perverſe; yet he ſeems to have thought very differently of any ſuch compliance with *Chriſtian* rites. Thus, for inſtance, he ſpeaks of Julian's occaſional conformity, after he became an apoſtate: "But as every act of *diſſimulation* "muſt be painful to an ingenuous ſpirit, the profeſſion "of Chriſtianity increaſed his averſion for a religion, "which oppreſſed the freedom of his mind, and com- "pelled him to hold a conduct repugnant to the *nobleſt* "*attributes of human nature*, SINCERITY and COU- "RAGE." *Decline and Fall*, ch. xxiii. This is the ſame author who blames the Chriſtian Fathers for refuſing to join in the Pagan rites! In another place he ſpeaks

ſpeaks of the Pagan ſenators, who *reluctantly* renounced the worſhip of Jupiter, in the preſence of Theodoſius, as eager to throw aſide "the mark of *odious diſſimula-* "*tion.*" ch. xxviii.

I would recommend to any young perſon who ſhould be prejudiced againſt the primitive Fathers, and primitive Chriſtianity, by *Mr. Gibbon's Strictures*, not to form their judgment from his *choſen* authority, Tertullian; but to read the ſhort epiſtle of *Juſtin Martyr* to *Diognetus*, and his *Dialogue with Trypho*; the former of which is a beautiful ſummary of Chriſtianity, and the latter abounds in Chriſtian charity.—Let him read beſides *Athenagoras's Apology*; and as to the general conduct of the primitive Chriſtians under perſecution, and otherwiſe, he will find a much more juſt account in Mr. Bryant's elegant and conciſe *Treatiſe on the Authenticity of the Scriptures*, 2d edit. 1793.

I am ſorry to have ſtill to add to this long note: but Mr. Gibbon's views and repreſentations of Pagan toleration alſo require ſome counterpoiſe, and therefore I cannot forbear to add the following admirable remark of Dr. Leland, to be found in the introduction to his excellent *Anſwer to Tindal*. "I cannot well reconcile "the extravagant accounts of that liberty, which flou- "riſhed among the Pagans, with the excuſe he makes "for the philoſophers;" (the excuſe is common with other writers, and, though a diſgraceful one, is the *only* excuſe that can be made for them;) "that if they "ſeemed to countenance the ſuperſtitions of their coun- "try, it was '*becauſe it was not ſafe to talk otherwiſe*;' "and that they were obliged to uſe '*ſoftening expreſ-* "*ſions*,' and that therefore they '*writ under great diſ-* "*advantages*." On this ſubject of Pagan toleration, which has been ſo continually miſrepreſented, the reader may further conſult *M. Pauw's Recherches Philoſophiques ſur les Grecs*; the *Abbé Nonnette's Erreurs de Voltaire*, vol. i. *Warburton's Divine Legation of Moſes*, b. ii. §§. 5. 6. *Kett's IIId Bampton Lecture*, and the references there; and *Fuller on Deiſm*, Part I. ch. 5.

Page 362. *note* (3).

It is far from my intention, and from the deſign of this work, to diſcuſs the ſeveral ſubjects of controverſy alluded

alluded to in the Diſcourſe. The ſubject of this Sermon is *Criticiſm in general*; its uſe and abuſe; with reference, however, particularly to the preſent times, and the *Age* of *Reaſon*, the chief topic of theſe Lectures. It cannot, I think, be queſtioned but that the two doctrines of *Atonement* and the *Trinity* are thoſe concerning which Biblical Criticiſm has been lately moſt occupied, and poſſibly always will be ſo. The firſt and leading objections to the received notions of atonement and the Trinity, have nothing indeed to do with Criticiſm. They are principally metaphyſical; *a priori* arguments on the part of Reaſon, as to what God can or cannot do, or be expected to do; what *muſt* be his preciſe mode of exiſtence, &c.—which are ſuch mere impertinencies, where the queſtion really relates to facts, that they are not worth conſidering. I muſt confeſs, I never can with any patient hope of improvement entertain ſuch queſtions as, whether God could require a ſacrifice? or whether he could not have forgiven us without a ſacrifice? whether his Unity may be, in the poſſibility of things, conſiſtent with a Trinity? &c. &c. Thoſe who regard the Bible as a revelation from God, have only to ſearch and enquire whether ſuch doctrines are to be found *there*. And in ſuch a caſe, nothing but Criticiſm, ſound and honeſt Criticiſm, can ſerve to ſober the intemperance of human Reaſon, to correct the miſtakes of ignorance, and to point out the miſrepreſentations of prejudice or incapacity.

That it will in all caſes be effectual, or that it ever will be even in one inſtance effectual, to the converſion of a *Deiſt* or *Socinian*, I do not pretend to ſay: not that I mean to charge any with ſo perverſe an obſtinacy, as to be blind to all truth; but becauſe the object of the former being to deny the uſe, and neceſſity, perhaps even the poſſibility, of a divine revelation, every argument drawn from the *ſacred* books may for ever continue queſtionable; and the object of the latter being *confeſſedly* to explain away the *literal* meaning of the text, no bounds can be ſet to the interpretations which fancy may ſuggeſt, or prejudice invent. But as long as Revelation is queſtioned, and the literal meaning of the Scriptures diſputed, Criticiſm muſt be of the

utmoſt uſe, to open the eyes of thoſe who are in danger of being miſled. If theſe queſtions were entirely confined to the learned, I hope I ſhould never be found deficient in reſpect for any man's talents and attainments, or an enemy to any inveſtigations honeſtly purſued, and decently conducted, let the concluſions they led to be what they might. But when thoſe who cry out moſt loudly for the unlimited exerciſe of Reaſon, will allow no man to have any reaſon but themſelves, or thoſe who think as they do; (for the title of *rational* Chriſtians ſurely implies this, which Dr. Prieſtley, Mr. Belſham, and Mr. Lindſey, inſiſt upon as being ſynonimous with Unitarian; "rational, *that is*, "Unitarian Chriſtians," are Dr. Prieſtley's own words; and Mr. Belſham and Mr. Lindſey have the ſame; ſee Magee, and an excellent note in *Fuller's Calviniſtic and Socinian Syſtems compared*, p. 42;) when, under pretence of learning, and great reading, and an *uncommon* application of "time, labour, patience and *candour*," the *common people* are given to underſtand, that the Bible does not contain doctrines, which the regular miniſtry of the Church have been careful to inſtruct them in; when the ſtrongeſt aſſertions are advanced which admit of being proved to be in direct oppoſition to the truth, it is impoſſible to overlook ſuch extravagant aſſumptions, and miſchievous attempts.

It is not againſt the *truly learned* or *truly conſcientious* Deiſt or Socinian, then, that any ſtrictures I have to advance are intended. I wiſh every *ſuch* opponent of the Trinity, or of the doctrine of atonement, or even of Revelation, to make the utmoſt uſe of his critical ſkill and knowledge. If the whole depends on the teſtimony of antiquity, the true meaning of certain Hebrew and Greek phraſes, and the true interpretations of the cuſtoms of paſt times, let every authority be carefully conſulted and examined: but let us not be told, *without examination*, that things are ſo, or not ſo: let not the maſs of the people be deceived into a notion, which we think a vain one, namely, that the literal terms of the Bible are only calculated to miſlead them, and that the doctrines of the Trinity and atonement, are the mere fabrication of incompetent Criticiſm, or bold Impoſture.

It

It is too common with the unlearned to fancy Criticiſm unfriendly to the cauſe of truth. They do not like to be told, that their ſalvation is to depend on the conſtruction of a Hebrew or Greek term, the ſubſtitution of a *Caph* for a *Beth*, or a *Jod* for a *Vau:* (ſee Note 2:) and God forbid it ſhould, in regard to themſelves. But if it is of conſequence to them to know the *terms* of ſalvation, (and if it is not, Revelation itſelf is of no uſe,) then it is fit they ſhould know that it is only from *bad* Critics they are in danger; ſound Criticiſm is their only ſecurity, and the truly learned their only friends. A few inſtances, perhaps, will ſerve to illuſtrate this; and if I ſelect them chiefly from the writings of Dr. Prieſtley and his aſſociates, it will be partly on account of their notoriety, and partly becauſe, though the Doctor particularly has treated theſe ſubjects with all the parade of learning in ſome editions of his works, where they are open to Criticiſm, and have accordingly been amply criticiſed; yet his opinions have been alſo vended and circulated, by himſelf and other editors, in a different ſhape; ſtripped of the criticiſms, and references, and citations; and in plain Engliſh: in which publications, (and I have one lying before me, dated three years *after* the valuable edition of Biſhop Horſley's charges and correſpondence,) diſputed aſſertions are *repeated* without proofs, and yet, as fully proved; as unanſwerable, though anſwered and refuted long before; as correct, though known to have been themſelves corrected, by ſuch an application of Criticiſm as cannot be diſputed.

It might well ſurpriſe an unlearned Chriſtian of the Church of England to be told, as Dr. Prieſtley tells us, that "from a full review of the religions of all ancient "and modern nations, they appear to have been ut-"terly deſtitute of any thing like a doctrine of proper "atonement." Any ſound Critic being an honeſt man would certainly never have ſaid this: but I do not mean to ſay that Dr. Prieſtley was not honeſt in making ſuch an aſſertion; for he challenges us to find, "in the range of the whole *Jewiſh* and *Heathen* world, "a ſingle fact in contradiction." This is at leaſt fair, and it is well for the truth, that Critics have not been wanting to make ſuch an enquiry. I will venture to

ſay, that the learned Profeſſor Magee alone (for a reference to his very learned Notes upon the ſubject, in his late publication on atonement, is ſurely ſufficient) has proved this aſſertion to be as contrary to fact, as any thing could be. It is a fortunate circumſtance therefore, that Criticiſm is ſtill cultivated ſufficiently to reſcue the world from the ill effects of ſuch confident, but ill founded aſſertions.—Again, as the opinions of the primitive Fathers of the Church will always be reſorted to as authority of no ſmall weight and reſpectability, when their teſtimony is adduced, it is highly important that their words ſhould be correctly tranſlated; and if terms which give a particular turn, if not the whole force, to a ſentence, are overlooked or omitted, it is well to have Critics who are capable of reſtoring them to their proper places. That ſuch accidents have befallen Dr. Prieſtley's references and tranſlations, may be ſeen in *Biſhop Horſley's Tracts*, Letter I. §. 7. Letter VI. §§. 12—23. Letter X. §. 4. And that other modern Unitarians are liable to ſuch overſights may be ſeen alſo, I think, in the review of *Mr. Jones's Developement of Facts*, *Brit. Crit.* vol. xviii. 630.

Any Trinitarian might well be ſtartled to learn from Dr. Prieſtley, that "we find nothing like Divinity "aſcribed to Jeſus Chriſt before Juſtin Martyr," and that "all the early Fathers ſpeak of Chriſt as not hav-"ing exiſted always."—And if there were no Critics capable of conſtruing Greek better than Dr. Prieſtley; if there were not ſome capable of reading what he never read, or of reading what he had read with more attention and better judgment; had there never been ſuch ſcholars as Biſhop Bull, and Biſhop Horſley, to examine into theſe matters, theſe very aſſertions might have paſſed for indiſputable truths. But I muſt confeſs I think the contrary is as clearly proved, as Criticiſm can prove it; and this is a queſtion merely of Criticiſm. How the Ante-Nicene Fathers expreſſed themſelves we know; who is moſt capable of interpreting their expreſſions, is another queſtion: but we may be ſure, that when Dr. Prieſtley, in rendering the celebrated paſſage of Theophilus, which he conceives to be the firſt introduction of the term Trinity, tells us, Theophilus wrote, that the "fourth day was the type of "man,

" man, who needs light, that the word may be God, " and the Man wiſdom," Dr. Prieſtley was not capable of underſtanding his authority. Dr. Prieſtley certainly here makes the learned Biſhop of Antioch talk nonſenſe *againſt* the Trinity, when he ſpoke as plainly as he could *in favour of it*, according to the language and manners of the times: Τετάρτη δὲ τύπος ἐστὶν Ἀνθρώπου· ὁ προσδεὴς τοῦ φωτός· ἵνα ᾖ Θεὸς, Λόγος, Σοφία, Ἄνθρωπος. " The fourth day was the type of Man, who needeth " light, that there might be, *God*, the *Word*, or Logos, " the *Wiſdom*, *Man*." Which, as Biſhop Horſley ſays, is ſo clear, that the ſenſe could hardly be miſſed at firſt ſight, by a ſchool-boy in his ſecond year of Greek: and indeed, conſidering what the context expreſſes, he is certainly right. See *Theoph. ad Autolyc.* lib. ii. p. 106. Oxon. 1684. See alſo the note there.

Dr. Prieſtley is dead and gone, and his Criticiſms are at an end. As an able and indefatigable experimentaliſt, his name will live for ever; and from the character he bore among his friends, we are forbidden to ſuſpect him of any intention to deceive. The foregoing inſtances therefore muſt be placed to the account either of his incapacity, or his careleſſneſs in forming his opinions upon theological ſubjects, and in delivering them to the world. But the harm that Dr. Prieſtley did not deſign, his writings may ſtill produce; and it is therefore, that I have thought it my duty to bear teſtimony to the equivocal character of his aſſertions, that they may not be received as truths by any means indiſputable. I have choſen the three inſtances adduced from the works of Biſhop Horſley and Profeſſor Magee, becauſe it gives me an opportunity to refer to publications, which may ſupply many other inſtances to the ſame purpoſe, and which, in this particular line of Biblical Criticiſm, are *truly an honour to the age*. I am ſorry to ſay, that my own collections from the works of Dr. Prieſtley might furniſh many more; but I muſt contract what I have to ſay. Any perſon competent to read the able, and, in moſt caſes, unanſwerable arguments of the two great living Critics referred to, will lament to be told, that an edition of ſome of Dr. Prieſtley's writings is extant, evidently prepared for the peruſal, and ſuited to the pockets, of the lower claſſes of

people: in which, as though no queſtion had ever ariſen upon the ſubject, the following is the account given of the death of Chriſt, as deſcribed in the Apoſtolic writings. "The death of Chriſt is *compared* to a "*Sacrifice* in general, BECAUSE he gave up his life in "the cauſe of virtue and of God; and more eſpecially "a *ſacrifice for ſin*, BECAUSE his death and reſurrec-"tion were neceſſary to the confirmation of the Goſ-"pel, by which ſinners are brought to repentance, and "thereby reconciled to God. It is called a *curſe*, BE-"CAUSE he died in a ſtate of ſuſpenſion, which was "by the Jews appropriated to thoſe perſons who were "conſidered as reprobated by God. And it is *called* a "*Paſſover*, BECAUSE it may be conſidered as a ſign of "our deliverance from the power of ſin, as the paſſover "among the Jews was a ſign of their deliverance "from the Egyptian bondage. It is alſo called a *Ran-*"*ſom*, BECAUSE we are delivered *by the Goſpel* from "ſin and miſery. On the ſame account, he is ſaid by "his death to *bear* or *take away our ſins*; ſince his "*Goſpel* delivers us from the power of ſin, and conſe-"quently from the puniſhment of it."

If this was only the opinion of a plain unlettered Engliſhman, it might paſs for one interpretation among others; and it would deſerve our indulgence, as a mere conjecture, which every man thinks, and may feel indeed in this country, that he has leave to form. But when it is officiouſly ſet forth as the ſentiments of a man who profeſſed to be a Critic in Greek and Latin; (and indeed in Hebrew, for his Criticiſms virtually extend as far;) who is known to have boaſted of the pains he had taken "to read, or at leaſt look *carefully* "through, many of the moſt capital works of the an-"cient Chriſtian writers;" it is really lamentable, that people ſhould be ſo miſled. There is no Latin or Greek or Hebrew in the whole book; but then we are encouraged to do without them, by truſting to the uſe Dr. Prieſtley had made of them; for we are here told confidently, what has been denied by moſt eminent Critics for many centuries paſt, that Chriſt *could not* have been a ſacrifice in the literal ſenſe of the term; that he *could not* have been the antitype of the Jewiſh ſacrifices, the paſchal lamb, or ſcape-goat; that the

tenor

tenor of the Scripture language is, that God is eſſentially merciful and gracious, without *the leaſt reference to any other being or agent whatſoever*, and diſpoſed to forgive us freely and gratuitouſly, upon our repentance and amendment, without any *other atonement or ſatisfaction*; that ſacrifices for ſin under the law of Moſes *were never* conſidered as *ſtanding in the place of ſinners*; that redemption means no more than deliverance in general; that to die *for* us, means only for our ſakes; and that to *bear* the ſins of mankind, is no more than to bear or take them away: upon which laſt obſervation, as it is accompanied with a critical *aſſertion*, I cannot forbear ſtopping to make ſome remarks.

"Beſide the manifeſt injuſtice, and indeed abſurdity," ſays Dr. Prieſtley, "of an innocent perſon being puniſh-
"ed for one that is guilty, the *word does* not ſignify to
"*bear* or *take upon another*, but to *bear away*, or to *re-*
"*move* by whatever means." There are two Hebrew words, (for of the Greek term, ἀναφέρω, uſed by St. Peter, I ſhall have to ſpeak elſewhere,) out of which Dr. Prieſtley had his choice, נשא and סבל. Which of theſe he alludes to we cannot ſay; but they are both diſcuſſed, and their meaning amply ſcrutiniſed by Profeſſor Magee, in the very learned and curious Notes to his Sermons already referred to. As this is the moſt modern Criticiſm upon theſe terms, it luckily includes all Dr. Prieſtley's objections; which are in fact only Dr. Taylor's and Mr. Dodſon's revived. Dr. Magee's concluſion upon the ſubject is, that when joined with the word SIN, they are conſtantly uſed, throughout Scripture, either in the ſenſe of *forgiving* it on the one hand; or of *ſuſtaining*, either directly or in figure, the *penal conſequences* of it on the other; and that they were undoubtedly ſo applied by Iſaiah in the celebrated prophecy of our Saviour, who was to be "*wounded* for our tranſgreſſions," and "*ſmitten* for "our iniquities," by whoſe "*chaſtiſement*" our peace was to be effected, and by whoſe "*bruiſes*" we were to be healed. Such a poſitive aſſurance, that the original word does not ſignify to *bear, or take upon another*, could only be calculated to turn the attention of the unlearned reader aſide from the doctrine of Chriſt's

having been a real ſacrifice and a proper atonement, by "bearing our ſins in his own body on the tree," 1 Pet. ii. 24; a paſſage the terms of which have alſo been diſputed, but which the ſame learned Profeſſor has likewiſe conſidered at length, and ably vindicated from the miſrepreſentations of Socinian Criticiſm. But the Engliſh reader who knows not a word of Hebrew, or Greek, or Latin, may, I think, be eaſily made to comprehend how much the truth is violated by any unqualified aſſertion, that to "*bear ſins*," in Scripture language, does not admit of the ſenſe of *bearing the ſins of another*, as a weight, or burthen, or puniſhment; for both the original words, סבל and נשא, are ſo uſed in ſome paſſages of Scripture, as to *admit of no other meaning*; but particularly excluding the meaning Socinians would inſiſt upon, that of "*bearing away*." The Deiſt and Infidel, who find ſuch fault with the *ſecond* Commandment, particularly Mr. Paine, will not ſuffer us, I fancy, to depart from this meaning, wherever in the Old Teſtament the *ſons* are ſpoken of as *bearing the iniquities of their fathers*. If any, in defence of the denunciations they are ſo offended with, were to pretend that the ſons were no otherwiſe to *bear* the iniquities of their fathers, than by removing them and bearing them away, I believe ſuch Criticiſm would be thought no better than a quibbling evaſion; and yet I think the Socinian could interpret thoſe paſſages no otherwiſe with any conſiſtency. The moſt ſtriking paſſages, in which this expreſſion occurs, are Lamentations v. 7. Ezekiel xviii. 19, 20. in the former of which the term סבל occurs, and in the latter נשא. The whole chapter of Ezekiel is ſufficient to convince any ingenuous mind, that to *bear* muſt here mean not only to bear the iniquities of another, but to partake in the weight and puniſhment of them. As for the other unqualified aſſertion which the paſſage contains, that "there is a "manifeſt injuſtice, and indeed abſurdity, in ſuppoſing "that an innocent perſon could be puniſhed for one "that is guilty;" I know not why, if good is to enſue, even in the eye of reaſon, an innocent perſon may not be permitted to ſuffer for the ſins of another, as *juſtly* as to ſuffer for *no guilt* or *crime of his own:* which appears to have certainly been the caſe with our bleſſed

bleſſed Lord at all events, Socinians themſelves being judges. But at leaſt, St. Peter was blind to this *very manifeſt* injuſtice and abſurdity; for he even tells us, and ſurely with great propriety, "that it is *better*, if the will "of God be ſo, that we ſuffer for well-doing, than for "evil-doing;" 1 Peter iii. 17: and how does he illuſtrate it? By the very caſe of our Saviour; "For "Chriſt," ſaith he, "hath once *ſuffered* for *ſin*, the "*juſt* for the *unjuſt*, (that he might bring us to God;)" ver. 18. And in the preceding chapter how does he encourage ſervants to the patient endurance of *unjuſt* ſufferings? "For this is thank-worthy, if a man, for "conſcience toward God, endure grief, *ſuffering* "*wrongfully*. For what glory is it, if when ye be "buffeted for *your faults*, ye ſhall take it patiently? "But if when ye do well, and ſuffer for it, ye take it "patiently, this is acceptable to God; for even here-"unto were ye called; becauſe Chriſt alſo *ſuffered* for "us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his "ſteps: who *did no ſin*, neither was guile found in his "mouth." Ch. ii. 19—22. I know we ſhall be ſent back to our Lexicons, and Bibles, to diſcover the true ſenſe of ſuffering FOR another, which is ſaid not to imply any ſubſtitution of one for another. Profeſſor Magee has conſidered this difficulty alſo in the 30th Note to his 1ſt Sermon; to which I muſt refer the reader, my only object being to ſhew, that it is not allowable to ſay in ſo unqualified a manner, that there is a manifeſt injuſtice and abſurdity in the notion of one perſon ſuffering for the guilt of another; for according to *our* notions, I ſee not, but that it might appear to be always unjuſt that the innocent ſhould ſuffer at all, and an abſurdity that they ſhould be made to ſuffer, or even be permitted to ſuffer, for *the ſake* of, and *for the benefit* of, the *ſinful* and *guilty*; which is the only amendment the Socinians offer us. The Racovian Catechiſm aſſerts, that Chriſt died, as *Victima ſuccedanea*; "and I think, (ſays the Examiner of Mr. Leſlie's laſt Dialogue on the Socinian Controverſy,) "he that "ſuffers with a deſign to prevent our ſuffering (which "is granted) truly ſuffers *noſtro loco*, in our ſtead."

Not long ago the world was much occupied in learning from Mr. Godwin what were the true princi-

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ples of Political Juſtice. Now one of the principles he lays down is to the following effect: "It is "right that I ſhould inflict ſuffering *in every caſe* where "it can be clearly ſhewn, that ſuch infliction will pro-"duce an overbalance of good: but this infliction "bears no reference to the mere innocence or guilt of "the perſon upon whom it is made. An *innocent* man "is the *proper* ſubject of it, if it tend to good." *Pol. Juſt.* vol. ii. p. 322.

It will ſtill, I know, be objected, as Epiſcopius of old objected, that it is a different thing to puniſh the innocent, and to puniſh one for the ſins of another, of which he was not guilty. There is a difference, we acknowledge; but yet a Socinian has been found, who has granted, that the latter has been the caſe with the *Jews*; and not only ſo, but that all nations have learnt from experience "quod gravia ſcelera etiam in liberis "vindicentur." See *Wolzogenius* on Matth. xxvii. 25. "His blood be upon us, and *upon our children*;" cited by Edwards, in the ſecond part of his *Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm*, p. 52. Grotius alſo, in his celebrated Tract *De Satisfactione Chriſti*, c. 4. obſerves, "Ubi conſenſus aliquis antecederet, ferme auſim dicere "omnium eorum quos Paganos diximus, neminem fu-"iſſe, qui alium ob alterius delictum puniri injuſtum "duceret."

I have ſhewn, that in the caſe of Dr. Prieſtley there is good reaſon to be ſuſpicious of his Criticiſms, when he ventures to tell us why it is that our Saviour's ſufferings are ſpoken of in terms applicable to the Jewiſh and heathen ſacrifices. His "BECAUSES" are not always very correct, nor yet Mr. Lindſey's "VIDELICETS;" of which I ſhall next proceed to give an inſtance.

In his *Hiſtorical View of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine and Worſhip*, he is very ſevere upon Dr. Doddridge's mode of Criticiſm concerning the two natures of Chriſt, in his paraphraſe on Mark xiii. 32. (*Family Expoſitor*, ſect. clxii.) Dr. Doddridge's mode of Criticiſm ariſes from a difficulty, which is common to the Trinitarian and Socinian; namely, that in the New Teſtament many things are predicated of Chriſt, which cannot be otherwiſe reconciled, than either by the ſuppoſition, that he poſſeſſed two natures, or by explaining

ing away ſome of the plaineſt and ſimpleſt declarations of Chriſt himſelf. Dr. Doddridge proceeds upon the firſt plan; Mr. Lindſey adopts the latter. Dr. Doddridge's mode of Criticiſm has been adopted by many very able commentators, and very well *illuſtrated* by the learned Mr. Leſlie, in his firſt Dialogue on the *Socinian Controverſy*. See alſo *Jenkin's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*, vol. ii. 360; *Burnet on the Articles*; *Biſhop Pretyman's Elements of Chriſtian Theology*; and the *Vth Dialogue of Athanaſius*, 183. edit. 1570.

That ſuch a mode of interpretation is natural, ſuppoſing the doctrine of the Incarnation to be true, Mr. Lindſey might learn from a work, which cannot be ſuſpected of any theological bias: and I ſhall cite it, becauſe it may at leaſt ſerve to ſhew, that Dr. Doddridge's method of interpretation is not a mere invention of *Chriſtian* divines, ſubſequent to the days of Eraſmus, as Mr. Lindſey would inſinuate.

The Hindus, who, it is well known, regarded an *incarnation* of the Deity to be an event ſtrictly poſſible, appear, from the Bhagvat-Geeta, to have exactly adopted the diſtinction Dr. Doddridge is cenſured for, and to have conceived it to be both natural and reaſonable. Kreeſhna, who is ſuppoſed to be the Deity Incarnate, after having diſcloſed his divine nature to Arjoon, in the following terms, among others, "I am "the Creator of all things, and all things proceed from "me;" is thus addreſſed by Arjoon: "Neither the "Dews nor the Danoos are acquainted, O Lord, with "thy appearance; thou alone, O Firſt of *Men*, knoweſt "thy own ſpirit." Upon which laſt words I find Mr. Wilkins's note to be, "Arjoon makes uſe of this ex-"preſſion, as addreſſing the *Deity* in his *human* ſhape." And thus at the beginning of the *XIth Lecture*, Arjoon is alſo repreſented as addreſſing the Incarnate Deity: "It is even as thou haſt deſcribed thyſelf, *O mighty* "*Lord!* I am now, *O moſt elevated of Men*, anxious to "behold thy divine countenance; wherefore, if thou "thinkeſt it may be beheld by me, ſhew me thy never-"failing ſpirit."

My object in this reference is only to ſhew, that ſuppoſing an incarnation of the Deity poſſible, it is natural

tural ſtill to ſpeak of the two natures as diſtinct, and to conceive, that the attributes of the Deity may, by the aſſumption of the human nature, be concealed from our view.

But to return to Mr. Lindſey. When Dr. Doddridge refers our Lord's ignorance of the day of judgment to his human nature, he ſupports his paraphraſe by citing John iii. 13. to ſhew, that it could not have regard to the divine nature of Chriſt, in reſpect to which he muſt neceſſarily have been, as *his own words* intimate, both omnipreſent and omniſcient. "*No man hath aſcended* "*up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven; even* "*the Son of Man, which is in heaven.*" Dr. Doddridge's paraphraſe has the conſent and approbation of almoſt all other commentators, who acknowledge the Divinity of our bleſſed Saviour: and the paſſage juſt cited from St. John is upon all occaſions held to expreſs at once both the hypoſtatical union, and the common diſtinction of the two natures. "Quod ſe filium hominis "(id eſt hominem) in cœlo eſſe docet," is Beza's explanation, "aperte duas naturas diſtinguit, et unam "hypoſtaſin confirmat." See his note upon the paſſage. But at all events, the pre-exiſtence of our Saviour would ſeem to be eſtabliſhed by it. Mr. Lindſey, however, denies this; and after blaming Dr. Doddridge for his "*quibbling arts,*" and the liberties he takes with the *expreſs* words of our Saviour, he tells us, that it has been thought by ſome to be made out to *full ſatisfaction,* that the words in queſtion hold forth *nothing of the kind* which is here inferred from them; but are thus to be underſtood:

And no man hath aſcended up to heaven.] VIDELICET, No man knows the whole mind and will of God, for the ſalvation of mankind.

But he that came down from heaven.] VIDELICET, But I, who have my commiſſion from God, who am his Prophet, his Meſſenger, and the Meſſiah.

Who is in heaven.] VIDELICET, Who am intimately acquainted with the counſels of God.

Mr. Lindſey ſubjoins, "Indolent and ſuperficial in-"quirers among Chriſtians, and unbelievers of like "character, *may object* to ſuch a conſtruction of our "Lord's words; that the *real meaning* ſhould be ſo re-

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" mote from the *ſound of the words*." But is not this, by Mr. Lindſey's own acknowledgment, to make *our Saviour* quibble? Is there any worſe way of equivocating, than to have a *real meaning* remote from the *ſound of the words* we utter? And yet it is in this way that the " rational Chriſtians" expound every ſpeech of our bleſſed Lord, which has been thought to infer his pre-exiſtence and divinity, his omnipreſence and omnipotence. It is thus alſo that they explain all that the Apoſtles have told us of the efficacy of the blood of Chriſt; and ſo remote do they make the *real meaning* of their expreſſions to be, from the *ſound of the words* made uſe of, that though the Apoſtle to the Hebrews inſiſts upon it, that the object of Chriſt's appearance upon earth was to " put away ſin by the *ſacrifice of* " *himſelf*," and that accordingly " Chriſt was once *of-* " *fered* to *bear the ſins* of many;" yet we are taught to believe his paſſion was no ſacrifice, his blood no atonement: we are confidently aſſured, that " Jeſus Chriſt " never profeſſed himſelf to be a Being of any other " nature than the human, and that his Apoſtles never " believed or declared him to be more." *Lindſey*, p. xi.

Trinitarians can never make a better defence for themſelves than by affirming, that they cannot believe otherwiſe, conſiſtently with their reſpect for the ſincerity and integrity of our Lord and his Diſciples. But Mr. Lindſey is highly offended with this mode of defence, and conſiders it as a baſe aſperſion of the characters of Chriſt and his Apoſtles. Biſhop Newton, from a full conſideration of the many paſſages in the New Teſtament, which have been generally held to aſſign to Chriſt the attributes and diſtinctions of the Godhead, concludes with reaſon, that if ſuch language is not to be conſidered as implying the proper divinity of Chriſt, our Saviour himſelf, and his holy Apoſtles, muſt lie under the imputation of being blaſphemers and impoſtors; which is ſo ſhocking and incredible, that we have no alternative, but to believe that God was *actually* in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf; that is, that Chriſt was God. Is this to aſperſe the characters of Chriſt and his Apoſtles? Is it not to vindicate and defend the integrity of their words? Suppoſe

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the Biſhop had rejected their evidence, and aſſigned as a reaſon, that he had diſcovered, that though the expreſſions were literally ſo intelligible, as that no one could miſtake them; yet that it was ſo much the way of Chriſt and his Apoſtles to uſe words remote in ſound from the *real* meaning they deſigned to expreſs, that he would not believe them, though they told him the ſame thing over and over again:—I believe it would be generally admitted, that *this* would be indeed a groſs aſperſion of their characters. It is odd enough that *Socinus* is in the ſame ſcrape with the Biſhop: he, it ſeems, judged, from the character given to our bleſſed Lord in the Goſpels, that prayer and invocation were ſo evidently due to him, that he declared, if it was not ſo, "Chriſt and his Apoſtles muſt have been moſt remarkable impoſtors and falſifiers, and no credit can "or ought to be given to any thing they ſay." To do Socinus juſtice, it ſhould be known, that he alſo carefully prefaces his remark with an aſſurance, that Chriſt and his Apoſtles had clearly taught the propriety and lawfulneſs of invoking Chriſt. "Sic enim cum ab IPSO, tum ab Apoſtolis edocti ſumus." And yet, what are Mr. Lindſey's reflections upon this? "Such vehement aſſeverations, and ſuch unworthy inſinuations "concerning our Lord and his Apoſtles, betray a mind "too much heated with prejudice and ſelf-opinion, to "inquire with a proper temper after truth." So much for Socinus ſingly: but when the Biſhop comes to be joined with him, "I would be far from ſaying," ſays Mr. Lindſey, "that Socinus or Biſhop Newton were "men void of true *piety*, as I believe they had a great "deal; and it is a diſpoſition of mind that is particularly diſcernible throughout all the writings of the "*former*. But this may be ſaid concerning them, from "the licence which they both gave themſelves in "aſperſing the characters of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, on "the ſuppoſition, that their words were not agreeable "to their interpretation of them; that they were men "of ſtrong paſſions, unreaſonably attached to their own "concluſions, and impatient of contradiction about "them; and perhaps, (which is the beſt apology that "can be made for them,) weakly imagined, that all "Reve-

" Revelation would fall to the ground, and come to " nothing, if their particular ſyſtems concerning it " were not to be embraced, and univerſally prevail."

It is certainly a great blunder in Mr. Lindſey's Criticiſm, that he cannot diſcover, that to give ſtrong credit to any doctrine, which we conceive to have been expreſsly taught by our Saviour and his Apoſtles, becauſe they would otherwiſe ſeem to have been impoſtors and falſifiers, is to defend and do honour to the integrity of their characters. How Mr. Lindſey could argue himſelf into the contrary ſuppoſition we can only judge from his own words: " It is wholly unaccount- " able," ſays he, " how men could bring themſelves " to uſe ſuch terms as theſe concerning the bleſſed Je- " ſus; that he muſt be thus undervalued and ſet at " nought, as a groſs impoſtor, a foul blaſphemer, or " downright madman, if he be not what ſome men " take him to be, and do not come up to all that their " warm imaginations have figured to them concerning " him." Indeed they do no ſuch thing: they only ſay, his expreſſions ſo palpably convey to us the notion of his divinity, and his title to invocation, that we *muſt* believe both, becauſe the bleſſed Jeſus was in his whole life ſo pure, ſo holy, ſo correct, that we could believe any thing ſooner than that he could impoſe on us, or blaſpheme God, or indulge any frantic ideas of his own equality with him. This is the ſubſtance of both Biſhop Newton's and Socinus's defence; and as it is the *beſt* reaſon to be aſſigned for our belief of the Trinity, it is well to vindicate it from ſuch ſtrange and inconſiſtent Criticiſm. Biſhop Burnet adopts the ſame method of vindication of his belief of the divinity of Chriſt: " When all theſe things are laid to- " gether, in that variety of expreſſions, in which they " lie ſcattered in the New Teſtament, it is not poſſible " to retain any reverence for thoſe books, if we ima- " gine they are written in a ſtyle ſo full of approaches " to the deifying of a mere man, that without a very " critical ſtudying of languages and phraſes," (and we might add, upon Mr. Lindſey's authority, and the cuſtom of other rational Chriſtians, a *ſubſtitution of ſome meaning very remote from the ſound of the words uſed*,) " it is not poſſible to underſtand them otherwiſe. Ido-

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" latry and a plurality of Gods ſeem to be the main " things that the Scriptures warn us againſt; and yet " here is a purſued thread of paſſages and diſcourſes, " that do naturally lead a man to think that Chriſt is " the true God; who yet, according to thoſe who de- " ny his divinity, only acted in his name, and has now " a high honour conferred on him by God."

Biſhop Newton is alſo reproached by Mr. Lindſey for expreſſing his belief, that the Socinians and Unitarians were of that deſcription of heretics, whom St. Peter alludes to, 2 Peter ii. 1. and whom he charges with the ſin of denying the Lord that bought them: for the Socinians neither admit the divinity of Chriſt, nor acknowledge that he made atonement for our ſins. But this, ſays Mr. Lindſey, is a miſtake of the Biſhop's. " The Apoſtle ſpeaks not of Chriſt, but of God; for it " is not the uſual language of Scripture concerning " Chriſt, that *he* bought or redeemed us." This is really very extraordinary Criticiſm. Who was " *the* " *Lord that bought us*," but " *the Son of man, who gave* " *his life a ranſom for us?*" Matth. xx. 28. Mark x. 45. The " *one Mediator, the man Chriſt Jeſus, who gave him-* " *ſelf a ranſom for all.*" 1 Tim. ii. 5. 6. But Mr. Lindſey ſays it was *God* who bought us. Well then; the *Son* of *man* in Matthew and Mark, and the *one Mediator* in Timothy, muſt have been God: and ſuch is the real amount of Mr. Lindſey's argument againſt Biſhop Newton. No doubt, had the Biſhop undertaken to prove the divinity of Chriſt from the above paſſages of the two Evangeliſts and St. Paul, Mr. Lindſey would not have failed to point out to us, that it was only " the " Son of *Man*," the *Man* Chriſt Jeſus," who paid the ranſom. The fact is, it was paid by Chriſt Jeſus, who was truly Man. Mr. Lindſey ſays, it was paid by God, and the Trinitarians maintain, that Jeſus Chriſt was truly *God* alſo. Where then is the difference between us? Mr. Lindſey ſays it is the uſual language of Scripture, that God *bought* and redeemed us: St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Paul aſſure us, that Chriſt Jeſus, the Son of Man, paid the ranſom: what muſt we infer? I do not mean to make Mr. Lindſey a Trinitarian againſt his own conſent; I only mean to ſuggeſt, that the dilemma he has here brought himſelf into ſeems to be a

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ſtrong caſe for the application of his Biblical Criticiſm, by which the ſound of the words uſed requires to be conſidered, and repreſented as very remote from the writer's real meaning; where nothing leſs than a forced *videlicet* can poſſibly extricate him.

Mr. Lindſey, p. 254, laments the conſequences of Socinus's inveterate opinion concerning the propriety of invoking Chriſt, and cenſures the Racovian Catechiſms for adopting the error. The compilers, he ſays, were miſtaken, in alleging, that Chriſtians are ever deſcribed in the New Teſtament as thoſe that called upon the name of the Lord Jeſus. All the paſſages that are ſo rendered ſhould, ſays Mr. Lindſey, have been tranſlated, "thoſe that *were called by the name of Jeſus.*" He inſtances Acts ix. 14. 21. and 1 Cor. i. 2. If Mr. Lindſey can find an authority for *determining* the ſignification of τὰς ἐπικαλεμένας τὸ ὄνομα to be paſſive in theſe places, his Criticiſm might be liſtened to: but at the very beſt, he could only depend on the verb being ſometimes uſed actively, and ſometimes paſſively: whereas we have againſt him the authority of many moſt eminent critics; we have the example of the LXX, who have uniformly ἐπικαλεῖσθαι τὸ ὄνομα τῦ Κυρίε, to expreſs the invocation of God; we have Mr. Lindſey's own acknowledgment, that in the caſe of Stephen it is uſed actively, and that he certainly died "calling "upon the name of the Lord Jeſus;" and we have the profane teſtimony of Pliny to the cuſtom of invoking Chriſt among the primitive Chriſtians, whom he deſcribes as "addreſſing themſelves in prayer to Chriſt "quaſi DEO." The great Mr. Locke has been charged with a wilful endeavour δολεύειν ὑποθέσει, by the ſame ſort of Criticiſm; and Mr. Lindſey can ſcarcely, I think, eſcape a ſimilar imputation. See Wells's note on the laſt paſſage cited by Mr. Lindſey, 1 Cor. i. 2. It ſhould be remarked, as the learned Dr. Wells obſerves, that the τὸ λέγοντα, Acts vii. 5. indiſputably determines the ſignification of ἐπικαλέμενον to be "calling *upon*," in the caſe of Stephen. See *Leigh* and *Parkhurſt*, and conſult *Biſhop Horſley's XIIth Letter to Dr. Prieſtley.*

Page 365. *note* (4).

I hope I ſhall not do M. Volney any injuſtice, in the remarks I have to offer upon the very extraordinary

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ſuſpicions he has expreſſed concerning the real exiſtence of our bleſſed Saviour. Living altogether in the country, with no command of books, but ſuch as my own ſmall collection ſupplies, I am obliged ſometimes to truſt to tranſlations, which may be faulty: and in this particular inſtance, I muſt acknowledge, I have only an Engliſh edition of his *Ruins* to conſult; a ſpirited tranſlation certainly, and therefore perhaps correct; but without a name, and of a very ordinary appearance. Nor have I any opportunity of examining ſome of the many authorities to which M. Volney refers. I ſhall meddle with no more, therefore, than what I can immediately reply to: and if I miſtake M. Volney's arguments, through any error in the tranſlation I uſe, I ſhall hope to be excuſed, when it is conſidered, that as it is my object to prevent the world from being miſled by the abuſe of Criticiſm, Criticiſm is never more abuſed, than when it is made the means of dazzling the eyes of the vulgar, by cheap editions and officious tranſlations.

I have briefly ſtated in the Diſcourſe the ſum of M. Volney's arguments concerning the origin of Chriſtianity; in proof of which he alleges, in his note, that there are abſolutely no other monuments of the exiſtence of Jeſus Chriſt, as a human being, than a paſſage in Joſephus, *Antiq. Jud.* lib. xviii. c. 3; (it ſhould be c. 4;) a ſingle phraſe in Tacitus, *Annal.* lib. xv. c. 44; and the Goſpels. The firſt, he ſays, is *unanimouſly* acknowledged to be apocryphal; and the ſecond is ſo vague, and ſo *evidently taken from the depoſition of the Chriſtians before the tribunals*, that it may be ranked in the claſs of evangelical records. It remains to enquire, of what authority are *theſe* records? [i. e. the evangelical records, or Goſpels.] "All the world knows," ſays *Fauſtus*, who, though a Manichean, was one of the moſt learned men of the *third* century—"All the "world knows, that the Goſpels were neither written "by Jeſus Chriſt, nor his Apoſtles; but by certain un-"known perſons, who rightly judging, that they ſhould "not obtain belief reſpecting things which they had "not ſeen, placed at the head of their recitals the "names of cotemporary Apoſtles." For this piece of evidence M. Volney cites *Beauſobre*, vol. i. and *Burigni's*

rigni's Hiſt. des Apologiſtes de la Religion Chrétienne. The latter he calls a ſagacious writer, who has *demonſtrated* the abſolute uncertainty of thoſe foundations of the Chriſtian religion. And thus he concludes, as I have ſtated in my Diſcourſe, that "the exiſtence of Je-"ſus is no better proved, than that of Oſiris and Her-"cules, Fôt or Bedou;" "with whom," ſays M. de Guignes, "the Chineſe continually confound him, for "they never call Jeſus by any other name than Fôt." *Hiſt. des Huns.* As to this laſt circumſtance mentioned by M. de Guignes, which M. Volney ſeems to depend on a good deal; I muſt juſt ſtop to obſerve, that the name and religion of Fôt, or Foë, in China, *is ſaid*, according to that reſpectable Orientaliſt *Renaudot*, to have been introduced into China by an embaſſy, which had been ſent from thence to diſcover the *Prophet of the Weſt*, whom Confucius had ſeen in viſion, and foretold. But, inſtead of proſecuting their journey weſtward *beyond India*, they conceived Fôt to be the Prophet they were in ſearch of, and ſo returned, introducing his name and worſhip, idolatry, and the doctrine of the tranſmigration of ſouls, *inſtead of Chriſtianity*, which they *might* have imported; for this event is ſaid to have taken place thirty-five years after the death of our Saviour. See Renaudot's edition of two Arabic accounts of China, written in the ninth century; and *Couplet's Chronological Abridgment.*

Now if, according to M. Volney's method of Criticiſm, a vulgar error of the Chineſe is to be brought forward as a proof againſt the fact of Chriſt's real exiſtence, the tradition juſt referred to is, I think, fully entitled to as much credit. How much more credit it is entitled to, I do not pretend to ſay; but why it may not ſerve to account for the miſnomer alluded to, I ſee no reaſon whatever: and the work I take it from, *though not the ſtory*, is referred to by M. Volney himſelf. To proceed to M. Volney's *only* evidences, or monuments of the exiſtence of Jeſus Chriſt. The celebrated paſſage in Joſephus has *never been unanimouſly* pronounced to be apocryphal; but this is a trifle: it has certainly been ſuſpected, and too much ſo to be brought forward as any deciſive proof one way or the

other; though we have lately seen its *authenticity* insisted upon, by a critic as visionary, I think, as M. Volney. See *Jones's Development of Facts*, and *Analysis of the Epistle to the Romans*. But if the passage *is* apocryphal, if Josephus has supplied us with no decisive account of the life and ministry of our Lord, I think it has been proved, that, so far from his silence being any demonstration of Christ's *non-existence*, it is a particular proof that he did exist; for the *report* of his existence, of his miracles, &c. must have been prevalent when Josephus wrote; and there is much reason to think, had such reports not been true, he *must* have had many motives to prove them to have been false. See *Bishop Berkeley's Minute Philosopher*, Dial. vi. 295, 296. *Jenkin's Reasonableness of Christianity*, vol. i. 311, 312. and *Professor Bullet's Jewish and Heathen Testimonies*; where this is admirably shewn. But M. Volney does not seem to have known, that in two other passages Josephus speaks first of James the *brother* of Christ, τὸν ἀδελφὸν τῦ Ἰησῦ τῦ λεγομένυ Χριςῦ, and of John the *Baptist*; both pretty strong acknowledgments of his human existence.—Let us proceed to Tacitus.

Tacitus by no means himself refers us to the depositions of the Christians: what he particularly affirms of Christ might just as probably, if not more probably, be derived from the public records of Rome, and perhaps from the representations of Pontius Pilate himself. His words are, not that the Christians only asserted this of Christ, but as a well known matter of fact; "Auctor "nominis ejus, Christus; (qui) Tiberio imperante, per "procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus e-"rat." The account he gives at the same time of the character of the Christians could never be derived from their own depositions; and what is more, so far from saying he learnt their name only from themselves, he expressly says, the vulgar, that is, the common people of Rome, called them Christians. "Quos—*vulgus* "Christianos appellabat." And then follows the reason of this appellation; which, as he was writing for posterity, and regarded Christianity only as a vain and pernicious superstition, (*exitiabilis superstitio*,) which would soon come to an end, was both proper and necessary.

ceſſary. But the alluſion to Chriſt is ſuch as, I think, to leave no poſſible doubt of Tacitus's own belief of the fact of his human exiſtence.

As to the teſtimony of the Goſpels, if we had no other means of tracing their authenticity and their real character as hiſtorical records, I muſt confeſs I ſhould be ſtrongly inclined to queſtion the opinion of that *Fauſtus the Manichean* of the third century, whom M. Volney has ſingled out; eſpecially when he tells us, all the world knew they were ſpurious. It is true, he cites *Beauſobre* and *M. Burigni*. I wiſh I had their works to examine, becauſe I much queſtion if Beauſobre could mention this opinion of Fauſtus, without ſome notice of its extravagance: at all events I ſhould expect to find ſuch a mark put upon it by M. Burigni, if he really is ſo *ſagacious* a writer as M. Volney pretends. But I have not their works by me, and I muſt ſay I do really not think it worth while to go much out of my way, either to verify or refute any criticiſm of M. Volney's. But M. Volney totally ſuppreſſes the evidence of the primitive Fathers. Why ſo? Does he include them among Fauſtus's "whole world," who knew the Goſpels to be ſpurious? *Tacitus*, it ſeems, was *no leſs*, *probably*, than an *Evangeliſt*; and yet the primitive Fathers, who had all been either Jews or Pagans, are not noticed, except indeed in one inſtance to give their teſtimony rather againſt Chriſt. Now it ſhould be remembered, that their evidence has generally been accounted particularly valid, becauſe they were not originally Evangeliſts, but converts. They themſelves claim to be truſted, in making proſelytes, as having been manifeſtly themſelves overcome by the weight of evidence: "De "veſtris primus," ſays Tertullian; "fiunt non naſcun-"tur Chriſtiani." And Juſtin Martyr with great animation, in his Cohortation to the Greeks, exclaims, Ἔλθετε, παιδευθῆτε· γενέσθε ὡς ἐγώ· ὅτι κἀγὼ ἤμην ὡς ὑμεῖς. But if their *declarations* concerning Chriſt and his religion are to be ſuſpected, ſurely their *appeals* are not. No writer, much leſs an apologiſt, would appeal to records in the hands of their enemies, if no ſuch records ever exiſted: but Tertullian and Juſtin Martyr make ſuch appeals: ſee the former, *adver. Marcion.* lib. iv. c. 7. 36. et *adver. Jud.* c. 9. *Apolog.* c. 21. and *Juſtin.* 1 *Apolog. ad Antonin.*

Antonin. Pium, p. 59. edit. Sylburg. 1593. They make such appeals to prove the *birth*, *death*, and resurrection of Christ; they appeal to the public records of Rome; to the reports of Pontius Pilate; records, which St. Chrysostom tells us were in being when he wrote, 400 years after the birth of Christ; *In Christi Natal.* tom. v. edit. Sav. The censual Tables at Rome bore evidence not only to his birth, but that he was, as the Prophets foretold he should be, (κατὰ σαρκὰ,) of the lineage of David, and that he was born at Bethlehem. Julian, who had the Roman archives in his keeping, and in his power, neither questioned the truth of our Saviour's life and miracles, nor refuted what Tertullian and Justin had asserted of them. To which we may add, that Justin Martyr had to do with Crescens, the Cynic philosopher, whom he challenged to dispute the cause of Christianity with him, before the senate of Rome. We cannot well doubt, therefore, but he would be correct in his appeals, and confident in such challenge. See *Jenkin's Reasonableness of Christianity*, and *Addison's Evidences of the Christian Religion*.

M. Volney's object, in thus endeavouring to set aside the human existence of Jesus Christ, is, as I have stated in the Sermon, in order to be able to persuade us, that he was no other than the Indian Vichenou, and that the Hindu and Christian Trinities are identical, and equally fabulous. His account is really so extraordinary, that I cannot give it in any words but his own: it begins as far back as the fall of man, which he confidently assures us is only an astronomical legend. "All "the *pretended* personages mentioned in the Penta- "teuch, from Adam to Abraham, or his father Terah, "are, it seems, mythological beings; stars, constella- "tions, countries. Adam is *Bootes*; Noah is *Osiris*, "*Xithuthrus*, *Janus*, *Saturn*; that is to say, Capricorn, "or the celestial genius that opened the year. Ac- "cordingly, when we read, that in the beginning a "man and a woman had by their fall brought sin and "evil into the world, we are to understand the *celestial* "virgin, or constellation *Virgo*, and the herdsman *Boo-* "*tes*, who setting heliacally at the autumnal equinox, "resigned the heavens to the wintry constellations, "and seemed, in sinking below the horizon, to intro- "duce

" duce into the world the genius of evil, *Abrimanes*, " repreſented by the conſtellation of the *Serpent*. By " the woman ſeducing the man, we have a lively " image of the Virgin ſetting before Bootes, and ap- " pearing to draw him after her," &c. &c. Nothing but M. Volney's great celebrity could have induced me to copy ſo far; I muſt contract the remainder as well as I can. " The fruit, by which man was ſeduced, " is the bunch of fruit, (in fact the ear of corn,) which " the Virgin holds in her hand. The cherub placed " at the entrance of the garden of Eden is the riſing " of Perſeus, ſword in hand, on the oppoſite ſide of the " heavens, as the Virgin and Bootes ſet. The offspring " of woman, foretold to cruſh the ſerpent's head, &c. " is the SUN, which, at the period of the ſummer ſol- " ſtice, at the preciſe moment that the Perſian Magi " drew the horoſcope of the new year, found itſelf in " the boſom of the Virgin; and which, on this ac- " count, was repreſented in their aſtrological pictures " in the form of an infant ſuckled by a chaſte virgin; " and afterwards became, at the vernal equinox, the " Ram, or *Lamb*, conqueror of the conſtellation of the " Serpent, which diſappeared from the heavens." We have now proceeded far enough to be able to compre- hend, if it is really comprehenſible, the curious *etymo- logical* proof M. Volney advances of our *Saviour's* hav- ing been no other than a fanciful ſymbol of the *Sun*; which it ſeems, among the many aſtrological and myſ- terious names beſtowed on it, was called ſometimes *Chris*, or Conſervator; and hence the Hindu God *Chris- en*, or *Chriſtna*; and the Chriſtian *Chriſtos*, the Son of Mary. For, ſays he, the Greeks uſed to expreſs by X, or Spaniſh iota, the aſpirated *ha* of the Orientals, who ſaid *haris*, in Hebrew *heres*, ſignifies the Sun; but in Arabic the meaning of the radical word is, to guard, to preſerve; and of *haris*, guardian and preſerver. It is the proper epithet of Vichenou, which *demonſtrates* at once the identity of the Indian and Chriſtian Trini- ties, and their common origin. It is manifeſtly but one ſyſtem; its principal trunk is the Pythagorean ſyſtem of the ſoul of the world, or *Iou-Piter*. The *epithet Piter*, or Father, having been applied to the Demiourgos of Plato, gave riſe to an ambiguity, which cauſed an en-

quiry to be made reſpecting the ſon of this father: in the opinions of the philoſophers the ſon was underſtanding, *Nous* or *Logos*, from which the Latins had their *Verbum*.—We may obſerve farther, he concludes, that if *Chris* comes from Hariſch with a Schin, it will ſignify *artificer*, an epithet belonging to the Sun. Theſe variations, which muſt have embarraſſed the ancients, prove it to be the type of Jeſus, as has been already remarked, in the time of Tertullian: "Many," ſays this writer, "ſuppoſe, with greater probability, that "the Sun is our God, and they refer us to the religion "of the Perſians." *Apologet.* c. xvi.

I have already ſtated in the Sermon, that Tertullian mentions not a word of Chriſtos being a type of the Sun. He certainly does ſtate two cauſes for the error he alludes to, which, it muſt be confeſſed, were plauſible enough; namely, that they prayed to the Eaſt, "denique inde ſuſpicio, quod innotuerit nos ad orien-"tem precari;" and that the Sunday was a feſtival with them, but which he expreſsly denies to have been at all connected with the worſhip of the Sun. "Æque "ſi Diem Solis lætitiæ indulgemus, alia longe ratione "quam religione Solis, &c." For an account of the cuſtom of praying to the Eaſt, ſee *Bingham's Antiquities*, b. xiii. c. 8. That no idolatry was intended by it we may be ſure; ſee the anſwer particularly directed to be given to *Heathens* by the author of the Queſtions to Antiochus, under the name of Athanaſius, *Quæſt.* 37.—One of the greateſt abominations which the Prophet Ezekiel is repreſented to have ſeen, when he was carried in a viſion to Jeruſalem, was the apoſtaſy of certain of the Jews, who turning their backs towards the Temple of God, directed their faces to the Eaſt, and worſhipped the *Sun*; ſee Ezekiel viii. 16. and *Prideaux* on the paſſage in the ivth book of the 1ſt Part of his *Connection*. This may appear to be a proper reaſon for the anſwer above directed to be given to the Heathen, if not for the ceremony itſelf: for as the anſwer ſeems to imply that there was an obvious neceſſity for giving glory to God as the Creator, and true Light of the world, in oppoſition to thoſe who worſhipped the created light of the Sun; ſo the Prophet Malachi's appellation of the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* would ſeem to be expreſsly *oppoſed* to the viſible

ble fountain of light. Juſtin Martyr (*Dial. cum Tryphone*, p. 274. edit. Sylburg) particularly draws a compariſon between the believers in Chriſt, and the idolatrous worſhippers of the Sun. Formerly, ſays he, God ſuffered men to worſhip the Sun; but nobody at any time was known to ſuffer death ſooner than renounce their faith in the Sun: but for the name of Jeſus ſome of all nations have been found to ſuſtain all kinds of ſufferings and puniſhments, ſooner than be brought to deny him. Therefore is it that David ſays, Τὸ ὄνομα ΑΥΤΟΥ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα· ὑπὲρ τὸν ἥλιον ἀνατελεῖ. Pſ. lxxii. 17. *Vulg.* "Sit nomen ejus benedictum in ſecula. *Ante* "*Solem* permanet nomen ejus;" which agrees with the LXX. St. Cyril of Jeruſalem, in his vith Catechetical Diſcourſe, ſpeaks of ſome who took, not Chriſt for the Sun, as M. Volney would do, but the Sun for the Chriſt; τὸν δὲ Χριστὸν τὸν ἥλιον τοῦτον καλοῦσιν. But theſe were of thoſe who acknowledged two principles, and therefore Cyril ſhews their inconſiſtency in allowing the Chriſt to be the ſon of the good principle, and yet confounding him with the Sun, a part of this world, which, according to them, proceeded from the bad principle. In his xith Lecture he alludes again to the ſame hereſy, φιμούσθωσαν οἱ λέγοντες τὸν ἥλιον εἶναι τὸν Χριστόν· ἡλίου γάρ ἐστι δημιουργος, οὐχ ὁ ἥλιος φαινόμενος. I wonder M. Volney, in the diſpoſition he was in to prove our Saviour to have been no more than the Sun, ſhould fix upon an etymological quibble, which totally betrays his cauſe, when he might certainly have deduced a more plauſible argument from the circumſtances juſt alluded to; which I have brought forward merely to ſhew, that his ſuſpicions appear to be, in ſome reſpects, no new ones, but that the primitive Fathers were amply prepared to combat them.

That the Orientaliſts ſhould, at the firſt introduction of Chriſtianity among them, miſtake the origin and meaning of the term Χριστὸς, as it is evident the Romans did, (ſee *Lactantius*, lib. iv. 7.) is not to be wondered: and perhaps this may have led to the interpolation of the celebrated poem of the Bhâgvat, and the more eaſy introduction of ſome parts of the ſpurious Goſpels, as Sir William Jones ſuſpected: ſee his *Paper on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India*, in the 1ſt vol. of the

the *Aſiatic Reſearches*: where, by the bye, he cenſures the *Miſſionaries* for having given the Hindus ground to think that their Trinity was the ſame as the Chriſtian, and ably points out the eſſential difference both of the Hindu and of the Platonic Trinities. That ſuch interpolations might be poſſible, we may now the more readily conclude, from the diſcovery that Lord Teignmouth has given us intimation of, in the Preface to his Life of Sir William Jones; namely, that the celebrated and very curious ſtory of Satyavrata (in all reſpects ſo conformable to the true hiſtory of Noah) had been interpolated into the Purana, which fell into the hands of Mr. Wilford: an interpolation ſo ingeniouſly managed, as to eſcape the detection as well of Sir William Jones, as of Mr. Wilford himſelf.

But whatever miſtakes may have happened in time paſt, in regard to the derivation and true meaning of the term Χριστὸς, M. Volney can never be excuſed as a modern Critic, for the manner in which he has endeavoured to account for the name. As he pretends to be converſant in the writings of Tertullian, he ought not to appear to be ignorant, as he does in this inſtance, of the true and orthodox meaning of the term: for in his treatiſe againſt Praxeas, ſpeaking of the very term, he ſays, "ſi tamen *nomen* eſt *Chriſtus*, et non appellatio "potius; *unctus* enim ſignificatur;" in which he was extremely right. Chriſt is not a name, but a title; "Chriſtus non proprium nomen eſt," ſays Lactantius, "ſed nuncupatio poteſtatis, et regni:" a paſſage M. Volney would do well to examine, becauſe it begins with noticing the *name* as well as the title of our bleſſed Lord; "Jeſus quippe inter *homines* nominatur;" ſee his *Inſtitut.* lib. iv. c. 7. It is true, M. Volney does not quite paſs over the name of Jeſus, any more than the title of Χριστὸς; for he remarks that *Chriſtos*, the ſon of Mary, was at other times called Yês by the union of three letters, which, according to their numerical value, form the number of 608, one of the *ſolar* periods. "And behold, O Europeans," ſays the Orator, "the "name which with a Latin termination has become "your *Yes-us*, or Jeſus; the ancient cabaliſtical name "given to young Bacchus, the clandeſtine ſon of the "virgin Minerva, who in the whole hiſtory of his life,

"and

" and even in his death, calls to mind the God of the " Chriſtians; that is, the Star of the day, of which " they are both of them emblems." It is odd enough, that when M. Volney was ſo buſy to find in the term Χριστὸς a *Conſervator*, or preſerving power, that is, the Indian Vichenou, he ſhould not have made uſe of this name of Jeſus, for this literally is *Conſervator*, upon the moſt claſſical authority: it being the very word choſen by Tacitus for rendering the Greek term Σωτὴρ, which every ſcholar knows to be the exact equivalent of the Hebrew יהושע. But M. Volney was aware probably that this would have overſet his argument; for, as Lactantius obſerves, "Jeſus inter homines nominatur," this name would have been rather too ſtrong a proof of his human exiſtence; including both his human nature and his ſaving power, according to Juſtin Martyr, who expreſsly obſerves, " Ἰησοῦς, καὶ Ἀνθρώπῳ, καὶ Σωτῆρος, ὄνομα " καὶ σημασίαν ἔχει." *Apol.* 1. Beſides, had he fixed upon Jeſus, *Conſervator*, to prove the identity of the Chriſtian Logos and the Indian Vichenou, he muſt have allowed that there had been *many Vichenou's* among the Jews, for this name of Jeſus was in common uſe.

But at laſt, to be ſerious, as the ſubject demands. Though M. Volney might hold the Goſpels in contempt, it is no reaſon why *we* ſhould: and at all events, when he choſe to criticiſe the Bible term of Χριστὸς, he ſhould at leaſt have allowed the Bible to explain it in its own way. Now it happens that twice in the Bible it is mentioned together with its own orthodox interpretation: in the firſt the diſciple Andrew informs Simon, " Εὑρήκαμεν τὸν Μεσσίαν, ὅ ἐστι μεθερμηνευόμενον ὁ Χριστός· " We have found the Meſſias, *which* is, being *interpreted*, " the *Chriſt*." John i. 42. In the ſecond, the woman of Samaria tells our Lord himſelf, " Οἶδα ὅτι Μεσσίας ἔρχε- " ται, ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός· I know that Meſſias cometh, " who is called (*otherwiſe*, or *by interpretation in the* " *Greek tongue*; Wells) Chriſt." John iv. 25. Now M. Volney had no right to paſs over this interpretation. If it is not ignorance, it is ſtratagem, to pretend that the term Chriſtos had any other derivation than is here aſſigned to it: and as the Hebrew משיח does not anſwer to one of M. Volney's abſurd conceits, and the Greek Χριστὸς is a literal tranſlation, (Χριστὸς γὰρ, ἀπὸ τὸ κεχρίσθαι,

κεχρῖσθαι, as Juſtin ſays, and as משיח from the root משח,) we can only regard M. Volney's attempt to ſet aſide our Saviour's human exiſtence by the means of Criticiſm, as a great abuſe of time and of talents, and a ſhocking attempt to miſlead the unlearned, who always deſerve to be protected from ſuch miſchievous deſigns. And the wiſh to do this may, I hope, be admitted as an excuſe for my having dwelt ſo long on a ſubject, not otherwiſe deſerving of it, and in regard to which the learned could not want any help.

I cannot however quite diſmiſs M. Volney without one or two more remarks. In a note, p. 135, the reader is deſired to obſerve in general, that in the pictures drawn of the ſeveral religions of the earth, the writer has endeavoured to give as accurately as poſſible the letter and ſpirit of the opinions of each party. But I muſt maintain, that, in regard both to Judaiſm and Chriſtianity, he has not kept even to the letter, much leſs to the ſpirit, of the ſacred books: of which I need ſelect no other inſtance than the very firſt paraphraſe he gives us. "In the beginning," ſays he, "God (after "having paſſed an eternity without doing any thing) "conceived at length the deſign (without apparent "motive) of forming the world out of nothing: that "having in ſix days created the whole univerſe, he "found himſelf tired on the ſeventh.—" We cannot wonder after this to find all the vulgar notions revived, of the whole world being damned for eating an apple, of the tyranny of God, &c. &c. Indeed M. Volney is in no inſtance more *accurate* than Mr. Paine, in his repreſentations of true and genuine Chriſtianity. M. Volney acknowledges, that from a view of all the different ſyſtems of religion, notwithſtanding their diſſimilitude in ſome points, their *reſemblance* in others was not leſs ſtriking; each claiming the firſt depoſit and the original diſcovery. Does not this imply that there was a firſt depoſit? and if ſo, which is likely to be that firſt ſyſtem, the moſt corrupt, or the moſt pure? M. Volney thinks the moſt corrupt. But in M. Volney's view of the progreſs of natural religion, he reduces it to the following heads:

I. Origin of the idea of God: worſhip of the *elements*, and the phyſical powers of Nature.

II. Worſhip

II. Worſhip of the *ſtars*, or Sabeiſm.

III. Worſhip of *ſymbols*, or *Idolatry*.

IV. Worſhip of *two principles*, or Dualiſm.

V. Myſtical or moral worſhip, or the ſyſtems of a future ſtate.

VI. The animated world, or worſhip of the *Univerſe* under different emblems.

VII. Worſhip of *fire*, (the *ſolar fire* principally,) as the ſoul or vital principle of the Univerſe.

VIII. The world a machine. Worſhip of the *Demiourgos*, or ſupreme Artificer.

M. Volney refers the whole to Egypt, and pretends that Moſes drew from thence; and though he admits, that he meant to form a ſeparate religion, to the excluſion of ſymbols, yet he finds in his God Jehovah, יהוה, or, as it is written in the tranſlation I uſe, Yahouh, *the ſoul of the world*, and its ſymbols in the fiery buſh. Nay, he finds the very name of Oſiris in the ſong of Moſes, Deut. xxxii. to which very chapter of the Bible *I* ſhould willingly refer the reader in proof of Moſes's *correct* ideas of the God of heaven. But what can we ſay about Oſiris? "Theïe," ſays M. Volney, "are the "literal expreſſions of the book of Deuteronomy, "ch. xxxii. The works of *Tſour* are perfect. Now "Tſour has been tranſlated by the word *Creator:* its "proper ſignification is to give forms, and this is one "of the definitions of Oſiris in Plutarch." Its proper ſignification is, I believe, ſo far to give forms, that as it ſignifies a *rock*, and is as ſuch, in the ſong alluded to, made an emblem of the *ſtability*, *might*, and *powerful protection* of God; ſo, as a piece of a rock or ſharp ſtone was often uſed as a knife, it might in that ſenſe give forms: but I verily ſee no other connection that can be traced, and am ſure that the word, as applied in Deuteronomy, has only the ſenſe aſſigned to it above. See Parkhurſt under צור. M. Volney has much more on the term *Yaboub*, but it is really too trifling to regard. I ſhall conclude with referring to the Hebrew Scriptures in general, for a proof how carefully and particularly the ſeveral errors of natural religion, ſtated and enumerated by M. Volney, were excluded by the religion of the Jews; as the worſhip of the *elements*, *ſtars*, *ſymbols*, *idols*, the *two principles*, and the *ſolar fire*. I need

need not point out the paſſages; it requires but little pains to diſcover them.

Page 375. *note* (5).

All of whom are claimed at leaſt by the Unitarians of the preſent day, as the friends of their party.] That is, they would make them out to be ſuch, if they could; for though the differences ſubſiſting ſeem to be invincible, yet their general agreement in detracting from the full divinity of our Saviour, conſtantly entitles them to a manifeſt preference, when their opinions are compared with thoſe Trinitarians who are commonly ſtyled *Athanaſians*. This may be plainly ſeen in *Mr. Lindſey's Hiſtorical View of the Unitarian Doctrine*; from which I have taken many of the names mentioned in the Diſcourſe. And though it is very unpleaſant to have to notice perſonalities, yet Mr. Lindſey indulges in them with ſuch freedom, and with ſuch profeſſions of impartiality, that they certainly deſerve to be noticed. He pretends to lay it down as a canon of Criticiſm, that "we have no "grounds or pretenſions whatſoever to aſſert, that the "religious perſuaſions of others, whatever they be, are "eſpouſed by them upon bad and intereſted views, and "not owing to ſincere conviction," p. 143: and yet he uniformly ſpeaks of the Trinitarians as people of "narrow prejudices," ſee particularly p. 31; of "weak "ſuperſtition;" as "idolaters," p. 3; and as interpreting Scripture with a "laboured partiality." And ſpeaking of Biſhop Newton, he ſays, "amidſt theſe extolled "popular writers, and learned men in high offices in "the Church, the generality of Chriſtians have little "chance for coming at the knowledge of Chriſt's *true* "character." But Socinus and Eraſmus and Dr. Clarke, &c. &c. though embracing doctrines very remote from the preſent Unitarian faith, are invariably learned and worthy, pious and ſincere. But to come to the ſubject of this note. Mr. Lindſey is poſitive that the Scriptures repreſent our Saviour as having been "in all reſpects a human creature;" that is, that the mere humanity of Chriſt is undoubtedly the doctrine of the New Teſtament. Surely then it muſt be matter of reaſonable ſurpriſe to Trinitarians, that this

ſhould

ſhould ſeem not to have been at all clear, even to thoſe who have been held to deny his proper divinity. Mr. Lindſey has noticed theſe errors of his friends in the work alluded to; and indeed it well became him to endeavour to account for them in ſome way or other. From his own ſtatement then, it appears, that Socinus held, that "beſides the one only true God of the He-"brew Church, the Chriſtian Church acknowledges "another true God, namely, the Man Jeſus of Nazareth, "called the Chriſt, who in the reigns of Auguſtus and "Tiberius was firſt born, exhibited and made known "to the world, and had then the *Divine Majeſty* be-"ſtowed upon him, by the Creator of heaven and "earth." This is Mr. Lindſey's tranſlation of Socinus's own words, which he allows are more extraordinary in *him* than in an anonymous writer he cites directly afterwards, and whom he alſo *claims* as an *Unitarian*; but who, with Socinus, was an advocate for the worſhip of Chriſt, and who went ſo far as to propoſe the following as ſpecimens of a becoming *mediatorial* worſhip of Chriſt. "I worſhip thee, the moſt high "and independent God." And again, (which I think no Trinitarian ever arrived to,) "I bow the knee be-"fore thee, the *immortal God*, who waſt *ſlain*, and haſt "redeemed me to God *by thy blood:* to thee be glory "for ever."—"I do not wonder," ſays Mr. Lindſey, "that this worthy perſon, who appears convinced that "prayer is to be addreſſed to Jeſus Chriſt as a great *pre-*"*exiſtent Being*, but not the *Supreme*, ſhould neverthe-"leſs ſo frequently ſtyle him GOD; and ſometimes be "drawn, as in theſe inſtances, to ſpeak of him in lan-"guage that can properly be uſed only of HIM, who is "the only true God." Now we muſt confeſs we are equally ſurpriſed at both, (if the mere humanity of Chriſt is the plain and evident doctrine of Scripture,) that Socinus and this anonymous writer, who are thought to be more than nominal *Unitarians*, ſhould either have ſuppoſed from the words of Scripture, that Chriſt was to be invoked in prayer, or that he was, in any ſenſe of the words, a true God. We are equally ſurpriſed, if the mere humanity of Chriſt is the plain doctrine of Scripture, that ſo learned and pious a Divine as Dr. Clarke ſhould ever have thought

"the

" the ſame *Perſon*, who, according to St. John, in the " fulneſs of time was made man, and dwelt among us, " did *before* dwell *with God*, acted in the capacity of a " *divine Perſon*, as the viſible *image of the inviſible* " *God*, by whom God *made all things*, and by whom " all things were from the beginning tranſacted be- " tween God and the creature." It does not ſatisfy us to be told by Mr. Lindſey, that Dr. Clarke "did not " enough conſider the objections which lay againſt ſuch " an interpretation."

Ruarus is another perſon claimed by Mr. Lindſey as an Unitarian, and yet he ſcruples not to conclude an epiſtle with Romans ix. 5. " May the Lord Jeſus, " who is God over all bleſſed for ever, pardon my " dulneſs." The Latin of this laſt paſſage does not appear; but of one immediately preceding we have the Latin in a note, which runs thus: " Si hoc eſt crimen " meum, ſæculo contra iviſſe, id mihi tecum ipſo commu- " ne lætor, et cum omnibus viris probis, cum ſanctis " Apoſtolis, cum ipſo Domino ac Deo *meo* Jeſu Chriſto." *M. Ruari Epiſtolæ*, vol. ii. p. 86.

Biſhop Hoadley obtains Mr. Lindſey's praiſe for his forms of prayer, which never conclude with any re- queſt to God for Chriſt's *ſake*. But after beſtowing this commendation, he laments, that the Biſhop after- wards adopts ſome of the prayers of the Liturgy which end ſo, and one particularly which concludes, "through " Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to whom, with thee, and the " Holy Ghoſt, be all honour and glory, world without " end."

Much of Mr. Lindſey's book is taken up with an account of Mr. Tucker, now well known to be the author of " The Light of Nature purſued," publiſhed under the fictitious name of Search. Mr. Lindſey aſ- ſures us he was a ſincere Chriſtian, and a firm believer of the Divine Unity; and I ſee no reaſon to diſpute it. If he was not a believer alſo of the Trinity, I am much miſtaken, if his conſent to this doctrine is to be mea- ſured by the difficulties he found to evade it. Mr. Lindſey acknowledges he was driven to adopt " in- " genious contrivances and refinements:" and ſo I think any one will believe, when he is told, that, in or- der to get rid of the Trinity, he conceives the Scrip- tures

tures to repreſent God under a *triple* deſcription, as one ſupreme Being acting in three *different* characters, Father, Son, and Spirit: he ſpeaks alſo of "the divine "operations being performed by three *Perſonæ* (Per-"ſons) in one God, not jointly, but each having a "diſtinct ſhare in them." "The union with man-"hood, and all done in virtue of that union was the "work of the Son: the aſſiſtance afforded occaſionally "to men in general was the province of the Holy "Spirit; and all the reſt of the Father." There is much more to the ſame effect; but I ſhall ſtate but one more expreſſion: "It appears," ſays he, "that Jeſus "was a real man, like unto us in all reſpects, ſin "only excepted; and that the Divinity united to him, "which together with his human ſoul and body com-"poſed one Chriſt, was the ſupreme Being ſubſtan-"tially and inſeparably preſent with him, ſupplying all "imperfections in the created parts." How much is it to be lamented, ſays Mr. Lindſey, that this worthy and learned man ſhould adopt ſuch language, when he only intended to ſay, that the Man Chriſt Jeſus had extraordinary powers and aſſiſtances from God above all other men! We know not what Mr. Tucker intended to ſay: we know what he has ſaid. We believe that he was juſtly accounted worthy; and of his learning we have ample proofs. Can it then be ſuppoſed, that Mr. Tucker conſidered the tenets of modern Unitarians to be altogether conſiſtent with the plain and evident language of the Scriptures? Could he conceive that the doctrine of the Trinity has no more foundation in the Scriptures than that of Tranſubſtantiation? In regard to the atonement he trifles in a way unbecoming the ſeriouſneſs of the ſubject, and not conſiſtent with his general character. His object Mr. Lindſey repreſents to have been, to give to the Trinitarian forms of worſhip in the eſtabliſhed Church, an Unitarian meaning. But as there is no doubt but that he meant to keep within the terms of the Scripture language, it muſt be evident how much the latter may be held to ſupport or countenance the Trinitarian interpretation, Unitarians themſelves being judges. Dr. Prieſtley's xviith ch. of his ivth book of the *Early Opinions concerning*

Chriſt may alſo be conſulted: his *Philoſophical Unitarians* were certainly much perplexed by the Scriptural expreſſions concerning Chriſt. See alſo the IIId Part of *Edwards's Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm.*

Page 376. *note* (6).

Eſpecially when, as in the former caſe, our Saviour did not deny the propriety of the inference they had drawn.] Amidſt the multiplicity of texts and paſſages, which have been made the ſubject of diſpute and controverſy, in regard to the doctrine of the Trinity, if I was required to fix upon thoſe, on which the doctrine might be moſt ſaid to depend, I ſhould certainly ſelect this repreſentation of our Saviour's conduct with the Jews, as the moſt ſtriking, and one which no Socinian Criticiſm which has fallen in my way has appeared at all capable of ſetting aſide. And I am the more aſſured it is a difficulty they never can get over, from one of the reaſons ſtated by the celebrated M. Abauzit, who was certainly too acute to uſe ſuch an argument, but in default of all others. He conjectures, that our Saviour would probably have explained himſelf more fully, had not the Jews taken up ſtones to caſt at him, and by ſo doing *obliged* our bleſſed Lord to retire; "*obligé Jeſus* "*Chriſt à ſe retirer.*" Now it is remarkable, that our Saviour *did* explain himſelf, notwithſtanding the Jews caſt ſtones at him, and even "*ſought to kill him:*" and in ſo doing, ſo far from ſhrinking from the charge of making himſelf equal with God, or explaining away his former declarations, he only increaſed the ſuſpicions of the Jews the more, and aggravated their wrath againſt him: ſee John v. and x. Beſides, at his trial he was not perſonally aſſaulted, or at all moleſted, when he was required to anſwer to the charge of blaſphemy preferred by the High Prieſt. He muſt have known that any acknowledgment of his being the Son of God, in the Jewiſh ſenſe of the terms, would ſubject him to the penalty of death; and *yet* he never denied it. It is not ſurpriſing that the argument to be drawn from this circumſtance of our Lord's conduct ſhould have been ſo often and ſo much inſiſted on. The true merits of the caſe are admirably ſtated in Biſhop Burgeſs's Sermon preached before the Univerſity of Oxford in 1790, entitled,

entitled, "*The Divinity of Chriſt proved from his own De-* "*clarations, atteſted and interpreted by his living Wit-* "*neſſes the Jews.*" I muſt acknowledge, that the arguments there uſed, had I not been previouſly aſſured of it, would have abundantly ſatisfied my mind of the propriety of regarding this as the *fundamental* proof of the doctrine of Chriſt's Divinity. See alſo *Leſlie's Socinian Controverſy*, Dial. III. and *Bp. Stillingfleet on Scripture Myſteries*; *Enchirid. Theolog.* vol. ii. 326. See alſo *Fuller's Socinian and Calviniſtic Syſtems compared*, Letter III. where it is exceedingly well argued againſt the modern Unitarians, who repreſent the doctrine of the Trinity to be the main obſtacle in the way of the converſion of Jews, Heathens, and Mahometans, (an old charge often refuted,) that if our Saviour's Divinity is a ſtumbling-block to modern Jews, they muſt greatly differ from their anceſtors; for *they* appear to have always attached the idea of *equality* to that of *ſonſhip* in reſpect of God: and the blaſphemy of which they accuſed our Lord was not that of any infringement of the divine Unity, or Polytheiſm; but that he, as Jeſus of Nazareth, pretended to be *the Son of God:* "For a good work we "ſtone thee not, but for blaſphemy; and becauſe thou, "BEING A MAN, MAKEST THYSELF GOD." John x. 33.

Page 378. *note* (7).

The interpretations I have put upon what are commonly called the damnatory clauſes of the Athanaſian Creed, I conceive to be ſtrictly juſtifiable from the very words of the Creed. The firſt clauſe only ſtates the value and importance of the Catholic Faith, as *before all other things* neceſſary to ſalvation. The ſecond repreſents the extreme danger of abandoning that Faith when once inſtructed in it, of ſuffering any ſuperſtitious additions to be made to it, or in allowing it to be defiled by any idolatrous abominations. It is only applicable to Chriſtians already in the profeſſion of the Faith, as the expreſſions ſhew. "Ante omnia opus eſt "ut *teneat* Catholicam Fidem." And again, "Quam "niſi quis integram *ſervaverit.*" "Rogo et admoneo "vos, fratres cariſſimi," ſays Cæſarius, (*Biſhop of Arles in* 503,) "ut quicunque vult ſalvus eſſe, Fidem *rectam* et "*Catholicam diſcat*, firmiter *teneat*, *inviolatamque* con-

"ſervet." The laſt clauſe of the Creed in its native language, as the learned Waterland calls it, runs, "Hæc eſt Fides Catholica, quam niſi quiſque *fideliter*, "*firmiterque* crediderit, ſalvus eſſe non poterit:" with which he parallels the following paſſage from St. Auſtin; "Cavete dilectiſſimi, ne quis vos ab Eccleſiæ "Catholicæ Fide ac unitate *ſeducat*. Qui enim vobis ali-"ter evangelizaverit præterquam quod accepiſtis, ana-"thema ſit." *Auguſt.* tom. v. 592. So alſo we are told in clauſe 27. "That it is neceſſary we believe "*rightly* the incarnation of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt." For, ſays Dr. Waterland, to *corrupt* and *deprave* this doctrine is to defeat and fruſtrate, in a great meaſure, the whole Goſpel of Chriſt, which bringeth ſalvation. Compare Heb. x. 38, 39. Upon the two firſt clauſes, Profeſſor Jenkin ſays, "But this ſuppoſes, that he hath "already attained, or is able to attain to the know-"ledge which is neceſſary to Faith; for no man can "*hold* that Faith, the *general* knowledge whereof he "cannot attain." See more on the Athanaſian Creed, in the 2d vol. of his *Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion*, p. 439.

Creeds and Catechiſms appear to have given ſuch offence to many, who chooſe to regard them as *intolerable reſtrictions*, and only of human invention, that I am inclined to agree with Dr. Waterland, that it would perhaps have been better if the more ancient title of this Creed in particular had been retained; *Expoſitio Catholicæ Fidei*; *Expoſitio Symboli Apoſtolorum:* for it is undoubtedly nothing more than an *explanation* of the true Trinitarian Faith, contained in the ſhorter ſummary of the Apoſtles' Creed; an explanation, *every word* of which perhaps was immediately oppoſed to errors prevalent, in ſome ſhape or other, when it was firſt compoſed: for as it would not have been neceſſary, ſo it probably never would have been thought of, but for the prevalence and inveteracy of thoſe very errors. It would be *eaſy* even now to point out the ſeveral ſpecific heretical doctrines of antiquity, which it expreſsly oppoſes: but I much doubt if *modern times* are free from the very errors alluded to, though diſtinguiſhed by different marks and different appellations. Among the Anti-Trinitarians of the preſent

ſent day, though now generally reduced to Socinians and ſimple Unitarians; ſo little in agreement are they one with another, ſo much perplexed do they all appear to be in their expoſitions of the Scripture, and ſo *embarraſſed* by the *literal terms*, that I doubt whether there are not ſtill among them, as of old, *Arians*, *Pelagians*, *Semi-Pelagians*, *Eutychians*, and perhaps every diviſion and ſubdiviſion of every different hereſy of ancient times. It is well therefore not to abandon this "*Pro-* "*pugnaculum Primi Symboli Apoſtolici*," as Luther calls it. I am ſorry it gives offence to the ignorant and unlearned: but indeed I think it is only to the ignorant and unlearned that it *need* give offence. And though it may be thought that *no* ſtumbling-block ſhould be laid in the way of the unlearned; yet I am aſſured, that if this Profeſſion of Faith was to be withdrawn, it would be the occaſion of many worſe ſtumbling-blocks being laid in their way. It would be made a cauſe of *triumph* to thoſe who have gained *no victory*; and a great cauſe of *diſtruſt* to thoſe who, having *never been deceived*, may not, without great hazard to themſelves, and great detriment to the *cauſe of truth*, be encouraged to entertain ſuſpicions of it. This Profeſſion of Faith excludes *none* from ſalvation but thoſe who *will not* be ſaved. Nobody will be ſaved hereafter but by Chriſt; and that according to the Goſpel-terms of ſalvation, whether known or unknown. To be acquainted with thoſe terms is no indifferent matter: it is, in fact, to be no longer in darkneſs in regard to man's greateſt glory and chiefeſt good; and therefore cannot but be "be- "fore all things" *deſirable*; as a practical obedience to them, *after they are known*, muſt be "before all things "*neceſſary*." We may know from the expreſſions of thoſe who ſtill impugn the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, what a very ſerious and important difference there is between us. They interpret the Scriptures ſo, as to fancy it to be *idolatry* to worſhip Chriſt and the Holy Ghoſt: we interpret them ſo, as to believe, that if Chriſt was not God, and to all intents and purpoſes "One with the Father," he was a blaſphemer; as the Jews, upon the *ſame* evidence, of his *own conduct and declarations*, concluded. They will not unite with us, for fear of being held to worſhip

the creature as much as the Creator: we will not unite with them, for fear of being guilty of denying the Lord who bought us, and withholding from *the Son* that honour which he himself assured us was due to him. The spirit of the damnatory clauses is truly Scriptural, provided the doctrine of the Creed is so: and as we believe the latter, we cannot inculcate it better, than in the strong terms of the Gospel, that so the consciences of men may be awakened, and their fears raised, and *seducers* have the less hold of them. None will question or dispute the merciful charity of the blessed Jesus; and yet in his holy Gospel there is mention but of two ways, one leading unto destruction, the other bringing unto life, (Matth. vii. 13, 14;) of two sorts of men, whereof some believe, and they are saved; some believe not, and they are damned, (Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 18;) and of two states, one blessed where Lazarus is, the other cursed where Dives abides, [Luke xvi.] Some of the most modern interpreters of this Creed, and those not only most eminent for their learning, but in the highest stations of the established Church, regard these clauses only as Scriptural admonitions, and by no means as denunciations: see the present *Bp. of Bangor's* excellent Sermon on the subject, preached before the University of Oxford, November 16, 1800; and *Bishop Burgess's Sermon on the Divinity of Christ*, mentioned in the preceding note. "It is not the writer of the Creed," says his Lordship, "nor the church, nor the minister, "nor the communicants, who accompany him in the "service, that denounce condemnation against unbe-"lievers in the Catholic Faith: they pronounce the "sentence of the Scripture, not their own wills and "wishes. But objectors say," he adds, (and this ought certainly to be attended to,) "that the *Athanasian* doc-"trine is *not* the doctrine of Scripture; and therefore "that the damnatory sentence against the disbelief of "this doctrine is not the *sentence of Scripture*. When "objectors to the *uncharitable* spirit of the damnatory "clauses urge this, they desert the ground of their ob-"jection:" and nothing can be more true. The Scriptures alone must determine both the purity of the doctrine, and the validity of the sentence. At all events we may surely be permitted to pass sentence on ourselves;

ſelves; and therefore where the original deſign of the Creed is not underſtood; where for want of learning, and reading, and the ſtudy of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, men are ignorant of the numberleſs hereſies, and the infinite diverſity of opinions that have been entertained upon the ſubject, from the firſt eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity to the preſent day, by thoſe who are deſirous of being thought wiſe beyond what is written; it may reaſonably be received as an expoſition of the Creed, calculated to *exonerate the true believer* from the imputation continually thrown upon him, *in ſpite of his own moſt ſolemn declarations*; namely, that of believing in a Trinity of Perſons, abſolutely inconſiſtent with the Unity of the Godhead. This is a charge we deny. This we admit would be no better than idolatry. This we aſſert would not be to keep the Catholic Faith "whole and unde-"filed." This would be ſo foul an abomination in the ſight of God, that, in our opinion, he that doth ſo wilfully, "cannot be ſaved." And therefore it may well deſerve to be retained as a ſtanding proof of our *ſincerity*, againſt the very *uncharitable* charges of thoſe who diſſent from us; who ſtill continue, in defiance of all good manners, in defiance, as we think, of ſound Criticiſm, and certainly in defiance of true Chriſtian charity, to aſſert, that we *cannot believe what we profeſs to believe*; though we maintain the contrary, at the hazard of the utmoſt penalties the Scriptures have denounced againſt thoſe who are guilty of what our enemies moſt unjuſtly accuſe us; namely, the *foulеſt idolatry*; the "changing the truth of God for a lie, "and worſhipping and ſerving the creature more than "the Creator, ὃς ἐστιν εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰ-"ωνας ἀμήν!"

Page 379. *note* (8).

The proof of ſuch an aſſertion would be ſufficient to preclude all reaſoning upon the ſubject.] The Unitarians continually declare, that the Trinitarians affirm three *in numbers* to be but one, which "to abide by and not "diſcern is not to be a man." See this objection ably handled by *Biſhop Stillingfleet on the Trinity*, p. 57. Where he properly aſks, can they ſuppoſe, that before their time there were no men in the Church; none of

common ſenſe to tell the difference between one and three? It is a remarkable circumſtance to this purpoſe, which the Biſhop notices, that *Boethius*, equally ſkilful in philoſophy and Chriſtianity, wrote not only very learnedly on *arithmetic*, but very well, and very ably alſo, on the Catholic doctrine of the *Trinity*. Chriſt ſaid, "I and my Father are one;" 'EN ΕΣΜΕΝ. We know, that the Unity of the Godhead is the main tenet of Revelation; therefore we muſt reconcile theſe. Dr. Prieſtley inſinuates, that the Fathers would have ſaid, there were three Gods; "but the Scriptures having expreſsly aſſerted the contrary, they could not "do it in words." *Early Opinions*, vol. ii. 350. This is ſo far the caſe with *us*. We ſay not there are three Gods, becauſe the Scriptures are expreſs as to the Unity of the Godhead: but we nevertheleſs ſay, there are three that are God; Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; becauſe Chriſt hath told us ſo. In the form of baptiſm, whom could our Saviour mean by the *Son* but himſelf, the only begotten Son of God? Would he ever have ſo aſſociated two *creatures* with God, in a form of baptiſm, into the faith and worſhip of his heavenly Father? See *Leſlie*, vol. i. 348.

Mr. Hume ſays, though to perſons of a certain turn of mind it may not appear altogether abſurd, that ſeveral independent beings endowed with ſuperior wiſdom might conſpire in the contrivance and execution of one regular plan, *yet this is a mere arbitrary ſuppoſition*. All things in the univerſe are evidently of a piece; and this uniformity leads the mind to acknowledge one author. All this may be granted; yet Mr. Hume adds a note exceedingly applicable, I think, to the queſtion of the Trinity; which depends not on *arbitrary ſuppoſitions*, but on the *authority* whence we derive the doctrine. Mr. Hume's note is as follows: "The ſtatue "of Laocoon, as we learn from Pliny, was the work of "*three* artiſts; but it is certain, that *were we not told* "*ſo*, we ſhould never have concluded, that a group of "figures, cut from one ſtone, and united in one plan, "was not the work and contrivance of one ſtatuary. "To aſcribe any ſingle effect to the combination of ſe-"veral cauſes, is not ſurely a natural and obvious ſup-"poſition." Upon Pliny's authority Mr. Hume was contented

contented to believe, that three artiſts might have co-operated in the Laocoon, though *quite contrary* to the concluſion he ſhould *naturally* have formed. In like manner the doctrine of the Trinity does not depend on any concluſions we may form from a mere contemplation of the univerſe; but totally and entirely on our Saviour's own declarations. It is therefore that I have very particularly inſiſted in my Sermon upon the propriety and utility of beginning all our enquiries into the doctrine of the Trinity, with the New Teſtament. If this doctrine does not ſeem, by reaſonable and ſound criticiſm, deducible from thence, we have no other foundation to reſt on. For my own part, I look *ſolely* to the *New* Teſtament for the *revelation* of this doctrine; conceiving it to be quite immaterial, *as a previous queſtion*, what traces of it are diſcoverable either among Jews or Pagans. For I think, that, ſuppoſing the doctrine true, we might reaſonably conceive, that the *revelation* of it would be *chiefly* reſerved for the time of the Meſſiah. Before the Meſſiah became incarnate, the world was not in any need of knowing that the unity of the Godhead extended to three Perſons, though ſuch a circumſtance might have been revealed, if God ſaw fit. The Jewiſh and Pagan Trinities would certainly ſeem to prove, that it *had* pleaſed God to make ſuch a diſcovery of his mode of exiſtence from the very earlieſt ages: but ſtill the incarnation of the ſecond Perſon, and his written word, are the principal, if not the only authorities, both in point of time and record, that I ſhould think it abſolutely neceſſary to refer to. St. Auſtin acknowledges, that he found much of the Chriſtian doctrine in Plato; but that the incarnation of the *Logos* was ſtill peculiar to the Goſpel. "Sed "quia Verbum caro factum eſt, et habitavit in nobis, "non ibi legi." *Confeſſ. Op.* vol. i. p. 128.

In a recent publication of Dr. Jamieſon, on the *Uſe of Sacred Hiſtory*, the learned author obſerves; "The "Incarnation of the ſecond Perſon of the holy Trinity "is the great revelation of the New Teſtament: there "therefore we are to look for it. But that the ſame "ſecond Perſon ſhould be the *appearing* Divinity of the "Old Teſtament, is highly probable, from the terms "of Scripture, the opinions of the Jews themſelves,

"and

" and the conſiſtency of the thing. So far the Jews " may be ſaid to have had the Trinity revealed: but " its full revelation is to be ſought for in the New " Teſtament only; in the act and accompliſhment of " the redemption."

That traces, not at all obſcure, of a Trinity in Unity, and in ſome inſtances perhaps of a Trinity of Perſons, and Unity of Divinity, are diſcoverable in the records of all nations, cannot be denied. But I muſt confeſs, that had it never been revealed to either Jew or Gentile, till the incarnation of the Meſſiah, this would have been a circumſtance in no way interfering with *my* belief, had it been as clearly diſcoverable as I think it now is in the *New Teſtament*. The difficulties that have ariſen alſo concerning the late admiſſion of the perſonality and divinity of the Holy Spirit, would occaſion me no embarraſſment; no, not though it ſhould appear to have ariſen, as Dr. Prieſtley intimates, out of the doctrine and divinity of the Λόγος: for I think the form of baptiſm alone might lead us to make the enquiry, and to bring us to the concluſion, that as there is a Father, and Son, ſo alſo a Holy Spirit, in the Unity of the Godhead. If in this I differ from Mr. Maurice, who has lately taken ſuch great pains to elucidate the ſubject, and to whom we are ſo much indebted for his very learned account of the Aſiatic Trinities, it is not for want of duly conſidering his arguments, or the very curious analogies he has been at the pains to trace: but I muſt confeſs I do not quite agree with him, that if " the doctrine of the Trinity could not be found in the " Hebrew Scriptures, as clearly revealed as circum- " ſtances would admit, its being a genuine doctrine of " Chriſtianity might juſtly be ſuſpected." *Indian Antiquities*, vol. iv. There is only one caſe, in which I think this of importance; and that is, in regard to the perſonal character of our bleſſed Lord, as repreſented in the *Jewiſh prophecies:* and in this particular inſtance I think it has been very clearly proved, and eſpecially of late by *Biſhop Huntingford*, in his work *on the Trinity*, that the Prophets had a clear apprehenſion of the exalted nature of our Lord; and that, as well as the Evangeliſts, if they deſcribe him ſometimes as a man, at others they attribute to him alſo the brighteſt and

moſt

moſt indiſputable marks of Divinity. Believing the Trinity to be the doctrine of the New Teſtament, I conſider the Jewiſh and Pagan Trinities as remarkable confirmations of it; not *eſſential* to the *verification* of our Lord's own declarations, but *exceedingly corroborative of that interpretation of our Lord's words, which Trinitarians have adopted.*

As to the Chriſtian Trinity being a copy of the Oriental, or a modification of the Platonic Trinity, the grounds on which we profeſs to believe it render all ſuch doubts and ſuſpicions nugatory. The records from which *we* deduce it are in our hands. Whatever the Socinians may pretend, even if the Ante-Nicene Fathers in general had not profeſſed any belief in the Trinity, neither *their* omiſſion of the doctrine, nor yet *Juſtin Martyr's* adoption of it, would determine our faith. If any of the Fathers have overlooked it, or any of them Platoniſed in their expoſitions of it, this is really nothing to us. We ſay it is ſtill in the *Scriptures*; we ſay it is undoubtedly deducible from the terms and expreſſions there uſed, by fair and impartial criticiſm. The teſtimony of our Saviour is paramount to every other. To pretend that he borrowed the doctrine, is abſurd; becauſe there are ſome who deny that it ever was his doctrine: and as to thoſe who believe otherwiſe, if it was poſſible to prove him capable of *borrowing* ſuch a doctrine, ſo far from being God, he could not have been a Prophet of God, but a Pagan and Impoſtor; and thus we ſhould be brought back to the firſt evidences and credentials of Chriſtianity, which tend to ſhew, that in the nature of things *it was impoſſible he could be either.* To pretend that it is a *corruption* of Chriſtianity is alſo nothing to the purpoſe; and Dr. Prieſtley might have ſpared himſelf the pains, both of queſtioning the orthodoxy of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, and of expoſing the many inadequate explanations of the Trinity, that he has raked together: for while we have reaſon to think we have the very words of Chriſt to judge from, we can be reſponſible only for our *own* criticiſms, our *own* interpretations, and our *own* opinions.

SERMON

SERMON VIII.

PSALM cxlvii. 19, 20.

He ſheweth his word *unto Jacob, his* ſtatutes *and* ordinances *unto Iſrael.*

He hath not dealt ſo with any nation; neither have the heathen knowledge *of his* laws.

IN this divine hymn we have a lively deſcription of the providence of God, as it is to be collected from a view and conſideration of the natural effects of the viſible world. "Great is our Lord, and great is "his power; yea, and his wiſdom is infinite. "Who covereth the heaven with clouds, "and prepareth rain for the earth; and "maketh the graſs to grow upon the moun- "tains, and herb for the uſe of men. Who "giveth fodder unto the cattle, and feedeth "the young ravens that call upon him. He "maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth

"thee

" thee with the flour of wheat. He giveth " ſnow like wool, and ſcattereth the hoar- " froſt like aſhes. He caſteth forth his ice " like morſels; who is able to abide his " froſt? He ſendeth out his word, and melt- " eth them; he bloweth with his wind, and " the waters flow." Such providential acts of goodneſs, daily exhibited before our eyes, ſhould be ſufficient to encourage us to repoſe a confidence in the Almighty, under any preſſure of misfortune and calamity, and notwithſtanding any ſpeculative doubts, that may chance to ariſe in our minds, from the temporary prevalence of evil and diſtreſs. But, ſays the holy Pſalmiſt, (as a more ſure and certain encouragement to his deſpond- ing countrymen,) in addition to all theſe natural notices of his providential care and concern for his creatures, in addition to theſe conſpicuous and continual mercies, which are common to us with the heathens, " Un- " to *thee*, O Jacob, he has given his *word*; " his *ſtatutes* and his *ordinances* unto Iſrael. " He hath not dealt ſo with any nation; " neither have the heathen knowledge of " his LAWS."

Such was the holy Pſalmiſt's opinion of the

the diſtinction between natural religion and revealed. He was wiſe and conſiderate enough to acknowledge Revelation to be a great and moſt ſingular privilege and bleſſing; an additional ſecurity to all that could be ſupplied by the reaſon of man, from a contemplation of the viſible works of God. And the wiſe and prudent of all ages might well be expected to make the ſame acknowledgment; for it is not too much to ſay, conſidering the deplorable blindneſs and ignorance, into which thoſe nations have fallen, who have loſt or neglected the benefits of revealed knowledge, the difference is no leſs than between light and darkneſs, truth and error. Nevertheleſs, there have always been many in the world who have thought otherwiſe, and who, ſo far from regarding Revelation as any valuable or neceſſary addition to the light of nature, have both queſtioned its utility, and denied its exiſtence. And this brings me, in proſecution of the original plan of theſe Lectures, to conſider, under the head of ETHICS, the preſent ſtate of *moral* philoſophy, as *oppoſed* to, or *independent* of, divine Revelation.

So much has been ſaid and written upon the

the ſubject of the ſufficiency of human Reaſon to diſcover a rule of life (1), that it muſt be quite unneceſſary to diſcuſs this point at preſent: and as it has rather been the object of theſe Lectures to grant all that can with any degree of propriety be granted, and to draw concluſions from the ſtate of the ſeveral queſtions after ſuch conceſſions, I ſhall propoſe to admit, that human Reaſon might *poſſibly* have diſcovered every precept of morality to be found in the Scriptures. This is indeed to grant as much as can be with any reaſon expected [a]; for as to the purity and excellency of the Chriſtian precepts, I believe no Deiſt pretends to diſpute them; while it is quite certain, that no ſyſtem of pure Reaſon wholly free from exceptions has ever been known to exiſt, from one end of the earth to the other.

The utmoſt the human Reaſon has ventured to charge Chriſtianity with, as a ſyſtem of morality, is, firſt, the pretence of a divine interpoſition, where no neceſſity ex-

[a] See, as to the Chriſtian precepts *not to be found* in Pagan writers, a Tract, intitled, *The Strength and Weakneſs of human Reaſon*, 2d edit. 1737. p. 188.

iſted:

iſted: ſecondly, a few omiſſions and exceſſes, which have been firſt invented in order to ſlander her, and then exceedingly magnified in the handling of them: and thirdly, (an objection which would ſcarcely have been thought of, had any more ſolid ones been to be found,) that the Chriſtian ſyſtem is deficient in arrangement and philoſophical preciſion.

In regard to the neceſſity of God's interpoſition for moral purpoſes, I conceive no one even of this boaſted age of Reaſon would have the hardihood to maintain, that it will ever be in the power of man ſo to enforce his precepts, as to render them binding on the heart and diſpoſition. And yet, is the *ſpeculative* morality of individuals a matter of ſmall concern? Reaſon has pretended indeed to deviſe reſtraints for the *Atheiſt:* but the ſhifts ſhe has been driven to, to ſupport her pretenſions, muſt, I think, for ever be regarded as the moſt concluſive evidence of her extreme weakneſs. The love of glory, and regard to reputation, for inſtance, are the ſanctions ſhe would fix upon to enforce morality among Atheiſts: and when it is objected, that this only provides

for the open and conſpicuous conduct of the Atheiſt, not for any ſecret ſins he may be guilty of; any concealed indulgence of baſe and immoral practices; ſuch conſummate wits as *Lucretius* and *Bayle* could invent no further reſtraints, but the apprehenſion, which the Atheiſt might feel, leſt his hypocriſy and artifice ſhould come to be diſcovered in the wanderings of a diſturbed ſleep, or the paroxyſms of a fever.

The abſurdity of ſo precarious a reſtraint is too manifeſt to be much inſiſted on; nor indeed is it on account of its mere abſurdity, that I have adduced an inſtance ſo well known, and already ſo well expoſed[b]; but becauſe it particularly ſerves to demonſtrate, on the implied acknowledgment of Deiſts, if not of Atheiſts themſelves, the abſolute neceſſity of a divine will, an all-ſeeing Judge, and a future ſtate, to give effect to the very beſt moral laws: and that the queſtion relating to the ſufficiency of human ſyſtems of ethics muſt ultimately turn, not on the force or propriety of the precepts, but on the want of proper motives, and adequate

[b] *Divine Legation of Moſes*, b. i. §. 5.

ſanctions;

ſanctions; and that this is a point, which Reaſon cannot get over. I do not deny, that Reaſon has attempted it, as in the caſe adduced above: but it may be further remarked, that if her pretenſions were *juſt*, ſo far from proving any thing againſt the neceſſity of Revelation, this in itſelf would tend, I think, particularly to eſtabliſh it. For if we grant what has been required and inſiſted upon, in this inſtance, namely [c], that the Atheiſt is capable, to a certain degree, of the moral ſenſe; that he may have competent ideas of the eſſential difference between good and evil; that he may be as ſenſible as the Theiſt to the temporary applauſe of the world, and all outward circumſtances of honour and reputation: ſtill ſhould theſe things ſerve to ſecure his obedience to the laws of right and reaſon, where his own purpoſes are to be anſwered by them; yet, not being deciſively obligatory, they *give no ſecurity to the Theiſt;* they only ſerve ſo much the more to expoſe *him* to

[c] See *Toland's Adeiſidæmon*; *Shafteſbury's Characteriſtics*, vol. ii. 267; *Bayle's Penſées diverſes ſur la Comète*, c. 179; and *Diderot's Syſtême de la Nature*.

the artful and inſidious attempts of the Atheiſt, and to ſupply the latter with a protection and defence againſt the juſt ſuſpicions of the reſt of mankind. If Reaſon therefore was ſufficient to diſcover ſuch motives for the right government and conduct of our lives, motives as applicable to the Atheiſt as the Theiſt; yet, for the peace, and happineſs, and ſecurity of the world, a divine Revelation would ſtill be, on this very account, peculiarly neceſſary. For it is certainly not only of importance to us to know upon what motives we ought to act ourſelves; but it is, generally ſpeaking, of exceeding great importance alſo, that we ſhould know what motives govern others.

What ſecurity can we have, that others will act upon the ſame principles two days together, who acknowledge no other foundation for their moral conduct, but the ſpeculative judgment of themſelves, or their fellow men? What ſecurity can we have, that the man who to-day thinks himſelf reſponſible for the reſults of a deliberate choice, ſhall not to-morrow fall into the wildeſt notions of moral neceſſity, and diſcharge himſelf of all reſponſibility whatſo-

ever

ever for the conſequences of his own actions? What ſecurity can we have, that he who might readily be brought to ſee the abſurdity of diſputing the authority, or queſtioning the veracity, of a *divine* Inſtructor, may not become ſuddenly and ſecretly diſpoſed both to renounce the authority, and diſtruſt the veracity and abilities of a mere human legiſlator? In the caſe of the Jews abroad, whom I alluded to in my third Diſcourſe, it has been well urged againſt them[d], that in renouncing their belief of the *divine* origin of their law, ſo far from bettering their condition in Chriſtian ſocieties, which was the object of their addreſs, they would do well to conſider that their preſent toleration, privileges, and immunities, were to be aſcribed to their ſuppoſed acknowledgment of the ſame God, and ſubmiſſion to his *revealed* will; that much of their credit among Chriſtians neceſſarily depended on their acknowledgment of the *divine authority* of the Decalogue; and that it was the height

[d] See *M. de Luc's Lettre aux Juifs, Auteurs d'un Mémoire adreſſé à M. Teller*, §. 7.

of abſurdity to imagine, that by abandoning Moſes and the Prophets, and reducing their laws of morality, and the Decalogue in particular, to a level with the merely human conceptions of Plato, Socrates, or more particularly their own cotemporary Mendelſohn, they would produce a greater confidence among Chriſtians, either as to the duties they were willing to impoſe on themſelves, or their ſteadineſs in practiſing them.

And this is aſſuredly moſt true: for who would be contented to reſt the ſafety of his property, of his reputation, and good name, or of his domeſtic comforts, on the caſual interpretation of the book of nature, on the talents of their fellow-creatures for ratiocination and reflection, on their judgment and metaphyſical concluſions, on their ſelf-formed opinions of right and wrong, and whatever diſtinctions of juſt and unjuſt they may happen to fix upon; who might have the ſecurity of a divine law, not only written on tables of ſtone, but deeply impreſſed on the heart of every neighbour and fellow-creature, with the weight and force of a celeſtial mandate, "THOU SHALT NOT STEAL," "THOU

"SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY," "THOU "SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS," "THOU "SHALT NOT COVET?"

Let any man conſider the names, the reputation, the conſequence of thoſe ſpeculative philoſophers of this boaſted age of Reaſon, who have ventured to aſſert, that a divine revelation is unneceſſary for the enforcement of the laws of morality; and let him then decide upon the neceſſity merely with a view to his own happineſs and ſecurity, as ariſing out of the confidence he would wiſh to repoſe in his neighbours and aſſociates. I would venture to affirm, that no appeal could be made more likely to evince the poſitive and indiſpenſable neceſſity of an expreſs revelation of the will of God, in caſes of mere morality, or that have regard to the duties of ſocial intercourſe. And this is an appeal which involves no queſtion concerning the advancement of human knowledge, or the talents and abilities of particular writers; it relates diſtinctly to the *principle*, not the *precepts*, of morality. I only require every man to determine for himſelf, from the dictates of his own heart, and his own feelings, whether it is at all probable, or even poſſible,

that any principle of univerſal obligation, and unqueſtionable authority, can be diſcovered and put in force by mere human Reaſon (2).

That ſuch a principle has not yet been diſcovered I have a right to aſſume, from the conceſſions of modern philoſophers themſelves; morality being expreſsly enumerated among thoſe things which the ſyſtem of *perfectibility* is to advance and improve [e]. One writer congratulates himſelf, that the time is come for ſhewing morality to be a *phyſical* and *geometrical* ſcience, and as ſuch ſuſceptible of calculation and mathematical demonſtration [f].

To which I ſhould be tempted to reply, (without the leaſt intention to deny the great uſe and importance of method and arrangement in all ſyſtems purely human, or the leaſt wiſh to depreciate unneceſſarily either the labours or the talents of modern moraliſts; but with a view only to the *prin-*

[e] "There is no ſcience that is not capable of additions; no "art that may not be carried to a ſtill higher perfection. If "this be true of all other ſciences, why not of morals?" *Polit. Juſt.* 2d edit. b. i. c. 8.

[f] See the Advertiſement prefixed to the Engliſh 12mo edition of *Volney's Law of Nature.*

ciple

ciple of morality,) that the time for this geometrical ſyſtem of morality is indeed arrived, if we will conſent to abandon the exquiſite ſimplicity of Chriſtian ethics, for the complexity of modern claſſifications[g]; the natural dictates of feeling and affection, for the intricate deductions of moral and metaphyſical calculations[h]; if we will conſent to abandon thoſe ſublime but intelligible principles both of religion and morality, the love of God, and the love of man, for the precarious principle of "utility," or the glorious "omnipotence of truth;" if we will conſent to be governed by rule rather than ſentiment; to be actuated by an

[g] See the Edinburgh Review of *Mr. Bentham's Principes de Légiſlation*, No. vii. art. 1.

[h] See *Lloyd's Chriſtian Theology*, 253, 254. Note. "Mo-"rality itſelf is nothing but a calculation of conſequences—" "an eſtimate of conſequences." *Godwin*. "How is it," ſays Mr. Hall, in his excellent Diſcourſe on the Faſt 1803, "that, "after the lapſe of ſix thouſand years, we have, in contempt of "the experience of paſt ages, undertaken to *manufacture* a mo-"rality of our own; to decide by a calculation of intereſt, by "a ledger-book of profit and loſs, the preference of truth to "falſehood, of piety to blaſphemy, and of humanity and juſtice "to treachery and blood?" See alſo the Edinburgh Review referred to above, for ſome excellent remarks on the modern ſyſtems of *moral arithmetic*.

artificial

artificial rather than a real ſenſibility; and to have every emotion, every feeling, and every action towards our fellow-creatures fixed and determined by the preciſe claims of moral worth and rigid juſtice [i]; ſo hazardous to judge of, ſo difficult to adjuſt!

I have already had occaſion to ſpeak of the great uncertainty of modern metaphyſics in determining the principles of human actions; and it is no ſmall objection to modern ethics, that they are made to depend ſo much upon them. It is not enough now that the moraliſt ſhall be able to ſuggeſt motives; motives muſt be analyſed, and their operations accounted for in the fulleſt manner [k]. It is not thought ſufficient to direct

[i] "Juſtice would require," ſays Mr. Godwin, "that if Fenelon and his valet were in equal danger from fire, the "valet himſelf ought to chooſe rather to die than Fenelon "ſhould. Was the former my brother, father, or benefactor, "I ought ſtill to prefer the life of Fenelon, as more valuable. "What magic is there in the pronoun 'My,' to overturn the "deciſions of impartial truth? I ought to prefer no human "being to another becauſe that being is my father, my wife, "or my ſon; but becauſe, for reaſons which equally appeal to "all underſtandings, that being is entitled to preference." *Pol. Juſt.* vol. ii.

[k] See *Brown on the Characteriſtics*, p. 158. "And here we "ſhall find another metaphyſical cloud reſting upon *this* path,

"in

the human faculties to their true end, and point out proper means; but the nature and infallibility of ſuch faculties muſt be previouſly determined; their comparative energies, and their very exiſtence, proved and demonſtrated. And if ſuch ſpeculations could increaſe our certainty, or fix morality on a ſurer baſis, they might well be commended and encouraged: but conducted as they have been of late, they certainly tend only to involve us in greater perplexities, to ſupply continual freſh matter of doubt and diſputation, and to unſettle our confidence in other and far better principles, immutable in their nature, and of univerſal obligation.

Nor is it ſaying too much to affirm of modern theories, as has been ſaid of the ancient ones, that there has been nothing adduced by one modern philoſopher that has

" in itſelf plain and eaſy to all mankind: for the very notion " of the *motives* to virtue hath been as much confounded by " moral writers, as the idea of virtue itſelf. And here we " might travel through another ſyſtem of logomachies; while " one aſſerts, that we ought to be *moved* to *love* and *purſue* vir- " tue becauſe ſhe is *beautiful*; another, becauſe virtue is *good*; " another, becauſe virtue is *good in* itſelf; a fourth, becauſe vir- " tue is *truth*; a fifth, becauſe it is agreeable to *nature*; a ſixth, " becauſe it is agreeable to the *nature* of *things*."

not

not been contradicted and oppoſed by another. Two of the moſt popular writers of the continent, Rouſſeau and Helvetius, differed totally and eſſentially in regard to the principles of their reſpective ſyſtems. Rouſſeau inſiſted continually on the original purity and goodneſs of man: Helvetius ſpeaks of man as radically bad [l]. According to the former, every virtue under heaven is to be found among the ſavage tribe: according to Helvetius, ſavages have no notion of juſtice or humanity, or even natural affection. According to Rouſſeau, education and example are for ever the corruptors of primitive purity and native innocence: according to Helvetius, only education and example can render men feeling and humane [m]. According to Rouſſeau,

[l] Helvetius pretends indeed to deny this; and aſſerts, that he differs from Rouſſeau only in *this*; that as the latter pretends that man is born without vice, ſo *he* would maintain that he is equally born without virtue. But though Helvetius has admirably detected ſome of Rouſſeau's contradictions, he could not ſee his own; for the following is his account of the ſtate of nature. "Quel ſeroit dans toute ſociété l'homme *le plus dé-*" *teſtable?* l'homme de la NATURE, qui n'ayant point fait de "convention avec ſes ſemblables, n'obéiroit qu'à *ſon caprice* "et au ſentiment actuel qui l'inſpire." See alſo below.

[m] "La nature en avoit fait des ſangliers."

men

men are the beſt law to themſelves: according to Helvetius, before the exiſtence of ſettled compacts and inſtituted laws, there can be neither peace nor juſtice among men. Helvetius differs as widely from our own countrymen, Shafteſbury and Hutcheſon; declaring, in terms of ridicule and contempt, that he could no more form an idea of a moral ſenſe, than of a moral caſtle, or a moral elephant!

Such are the diſcordances of modern ethics and modern metaphyſics[n], without touching again on the endleſs diſputes on the ſubjects of neceſſity and materialiſm, which I had particular occaſion to allude to before; ſuch are the diſcordances which have reſpect only to the *principle* of morality. But philoſophers are little leſs agreed as to precepts and to duties; which is not to be wondered at, when we conſider that, with ſome, the paſſions require to be reſtrained by the moral ſenſe; with others, the paſſions themſelves are the only moral ſenſe we have to truſt to: with ſome, nature is an unerring guide

[n] Conſult alſo Dr. Dwight's two Diſcourſes referred to in Note (2).

to

to all that is good, and fit, and right; with others, the dictates of nature are made an excuſe for all that is baſe and horrible; for revenge, for ſuicide, for oppreſſion, for ambitious war, for luſt and rapine.

But let us not, in avoiding one error, fall into another. The high importance of Chriſtianity as a code of moral laws muſt not lead us to ſuppoſe that it is nothing more. This is an error, which, I am ſorry to ſay, has infected ſome, who might well be expected to judge more highly of Chriſtianity. We find it ſtrongly expreſſed in one publication °, which, (to rob no man of his good name,) the public have been informed, is written by a determined enemy to real impiety; ſo good a *moral* Chriſtian, (the warmth and beauty of the praiſe will, I hope, excuſe my repetition of it,) that with a ſcanty income, and no (known) proſpects of eccleſiaſtical preferment, he "adminiſters "medicine to the ſick, gives alms to the "needy, offers inſtruction to the ignorant, "viſits the fatherleſs and widows in their "affliction, and keeps himſelf in no com-

° See *Fellowes's "Religion without Cant."*

"mon

"mon degree unſpotted from the world[P]." I have to lament the neceſſity of combating opinions ſo recommended, and ſo ſupported: but the error is great, and the more dangerous from the very ſupport it has received. In a publication of the perſon ſo highly and, no doubt, ſo juſtly commended for its great moral worth, we not only find the general propoſition laid down, that "*Chriſ-*" *tianity is nothing more than a rule of life,*" but a wiſh is expreſſed, that "*this ſhould be* "*made the ſubject of every religious diſ-*" *courſe, ſo that one Church might ſerve for* "*all.*" And indeed this could not fail to be the caſe: one Church may ſerve for all, when the doctrinal parts of the Goſpel are ſo ſlightly accounted of, that Jew, Turk, Infidel, and Heretic, may have free leave to expunge or diſcredit whatever reſpectively oppoſes their ſeveral ideas. One Church may ſerve for all, when all that human Reaſon ſees fit to object to ſhall be given up on that very account. Inſtead of our converting Infidels by ſuch accommodation, as has

[P] See the Notes to *Parr's Spital Sermon*, p. 81.

been

been well obſerved, Infidels may thus obtain the credit of converting *us*.

For individual opinions there is no accounting; but *references* we may be allowed to queſtion: and in proof of the propoſition thus inſiſted upon, we find no leſs authorities cited, than Biſhop Taylor, Clarke, and Cave. Not to diſpute the meaning of ſome detached paſſages, that may be ſelected from the works of theſe great men, in favour of Chriſtian morality, (and perhaps too ſtrongly expreſſed, in order to meet the more dangerous errors of fanaticiſm prevalent in their days, and which has been ſhewn to have been the caſe with ſome of our beſt divines [q],) I ſhall content myſelf with ſelecting ſome paſſages from one of theſe great authorities; of which the leaſt we can ſay is, that they can by no means be reconciled with the notion and opinion, that the Chriſtian diſpenſation is *nothing more than a rule of life*.

Now, in the incomparable writings of Biſhop Taylor, I find the Goſpel diſpenſa-

[q] See the laſt chapter of *Warburton on Grace*.

tion

tion deſcribed in the following terms. Speaking of the glorious myſteries revealed in the Goſpel by the inſpiration of the Spirit, "what "power of the human underſtanding," ſaith he, "could have conjectured that God "ſhould ſo love us, as to be willing to be "reconciled to us, and yet that himſelf muſt "die that he might pardon us[r]?" And ſpeaking of repentance, he calls it ſuch a grace "as could not have been granted, un-"leſs Chriſt had died to purchaſe it[s]." And again, ſpeaking of the ſoul of man, "In "God's account," ſays he, "it is valued at "the price of the blood, and ſhame, and tor-"tures of the Son of God[t]." It is true, in his Sermon upon the Miracles of the Divine Mercy, he *does* ſay, "the whole religion of "a Chriſtian is nothing but juſtice and "mercy[u]:" but, that he might not be miſunderſtood, he particularly adds, "*as it relates* "*to others.*" And we ſay the ſame; and the Prophets ſaid the ſame. The Chriſtian religion, as it relates to the ſocial duties of a Chriſtian, is nothing but juſtice and mercy;

[r] Serm. on Whitſunday. [s] Serm. XII. p. 114.
[t] Serm. XIX. p. 118. [u] Serm. XXVI. p. 252.

it is as it regards the individual, or the ſpecies in general, that it is of infinitely more importance: "For," to apply again the words of the ſame high authority, "what is "the ſecret of the myſtery; *That the Son of* "*God ſhould take upon him our nature, and* "*die our death, and ſuffer for our ſins, and* "*do our work, and enable us to do our* "*own*[x]*!*" It cannot ſurely with any fairneſs be alleged after this, that Biſhop Taylor regarded Chriſtianity as "*nothing more than a* "*rule of life!*"(3) *Theſe* characters of Chriſtianity, as they regard our conduct, involve duties of a peculiar nature owing to God; not only as our Creator, but as our Redeemer. *They* involve the duties of *piety* and *devotion*; of *love, reverence, adoration, ſubmiſſion, affiance, reſignation*[y]; of *prayer, confeſſion* of *ſins, thankſgiving, praiſe.* Theſe involve, as the indiſpenſable *fruits* of our *faith in Chriſt,* the duties owing to ourſelves; *ſelf-government, chaſtity, purity, humility, temperance;* and the proper regulation of our appetites and paſſions: none of which

[x] Serm. XXVII. p. 264.

[y] See *Leland's Deiſtical Writers,* Letter XXXV.

are

are ſufficiently provided for, if even ſo much as thought of, in many of the "*rational*" ſyſtems of the preſent day. And it is not to be paſſed over, that though the author of the *Age of Reaſon* could conſent to adopt into *his creed* the two duties of "doing juſtly" and "loving mercy," in the very terms uſed by the Prophet, inſtead of the other beautiful precept of the inſpired writer, "the walking humbly with his God," *he* thought fit to ſubſtitute a ſocial virtue of eaſier practice. But to return from this digreſſion.

Chriſtianity has been accuſed both of omiſſions and exceſſes in the *preceptive* parts. I have already obſerved, that theſe were firſt invented in order to ſlander her, and then exceedingly magnified in the handling of them; and nothing, I think, can be more true. They have certainly been *invented*, becauſe, in regard to the *omiſſions* that have been more particularly inſiſted upon, it is eaſy to prove, and it *has* been *amply* proved, that all that is true and ſound and valuable, in patriotiſm, friendſhip, and valour, if not directly enjoined in the Goſpel, is certainly *virtually* recommended

there: and if they are recommended there rather as branches of univerſal benevolence, philanthropy, and charity, than as diſtinct virtues, it is expreſsly to the excluſion of all that contributed to render them exceptionable as Pagan and heroic virtues. Nor is it leſs eaſy to prove, in reſpect to the *exceſſes* with which Chriſtianity ſtands charged, that while no virtue which ſhe inculcates, and which is deſigned to be of *general* obligation, does in the leaſt exceed the bounds, which the calmeſt reaſon of mankind would approve, every precept that carries the aſpect of peculiar reſtraint, ſuch as the non-reſiſtance of evil, perpetual patience, and a neglect of all we eat, drink, and wear, is palpably confined to the firſt Apoſtles, who, from the very nature of their high and important functions, were to exhibit *extraordinary* examples of mildneſs, patience, and benignity; and even as applicable to the Apoſtles, *common ſenſe* might ſerve to point out to us, that they do not require to be urged or underſtood to the utmoſt extent of the letter.

How much both theſe omiſſions and exceſſes have been *magnified*, cannot be better evinced

evinced than in the caſe juſt alluded to; the temporary injunctions laid upon the Apoſtles, having firſt been unwarrantably, and in one inſtance very injudiciouſly[z], extended to Chriſtians of all ages, and of every denomination, and then adduced to prove even this extraordinary principle, that "*God had conſtituted a world upon one plan, and a religion for it on another.*" Patriotiſm and friendſhip have alſo been groſsly miſrepreſented, and with different views. As Pagan virtues they have at one time been extravagantly extolled, in order to faſten a reproach on Chriſtianity for the *omiſſion* of them in the Goſpel; while at another time they have been vilified in ſuch unqualified terms, through an indiſcreet deſign of *vindicating* their *omiſſion*, as to render them (though, under proper regulations, ſo important to ſociety in general, as well as to individuals in particular) apparently incompatible with the ſpirit of our moſt holy religion. But as *theſe* miſrepreſentations of Chriſtiani-

[z] See *Mr. Jenyns's Internal Evidence of the Chriſtian Religion.*

ty have been repeatedly noticed and admirably expoſed by various writers, I need not take up more of your time with them at preſent (4).

It is further objected to Chriſtianity, that, as a ſyſtem, it is deficient in arrangement and philoſophical preciſion. This might be an objection, if morality depended altogether upon arrangement, or philoſophical preciſion was its principal excellence. I have already obſerved how much is to be attributed to arrangement and preciſion in ſyſtems purely human; but in *divine* laws, perſpicuity and authority are all we have to attend to.

One would imagine, that the two great commandments of the Goſpel, the Law, and the Prophets, "Thou ſhalt love the Lord "thy God with all thy heart and ſoul and "mind, and thy neighbour as thyſelf," were not *materially deficient* in arrangement or philoſophical preciſion: and yet one modern philoſopher of no ſmall celebrity has ventured to paſs his cenſure upon the latter, and to aſſure us, with ſome mixture indeed of faint commendation, that "it is not mo-"delled with the ſtrictneſs of philoſophical "accu-

"accuracy[a]." If it has the divine authority to back it, it may well be excuſed for its want of philoſophical accuracy, more eſpecially as in its own ſublime ſimplicity it ſtands clear of many philoſophical doubts, which might for ever obſtruct our view of the duties required of us. It is further explained by the precept, that "*we ſhould do unto others, as "we would they ſhould do unto us;*" that is, under a ſuppoſed change of circumſtances, which is manifeſtly implied (5). And how many difficulties, both metaphyſical and moral, might be ſettled by this one rule of action! How does ſuch a precept recommend itſelf to our obſervance? Is it left to depend on any vague notions of a moral fitneſs or unfitneſs of actions? on any nice and critical diſcernment of moral beauty or moral deformity? It is made to depend in fact on nothing merely theoretical or ſpeculative; but on two of the moſt ſimple principles, by which a rational being is governed, ſenſation and reflection. Nor does it require any nice and curious diſcrimination of time, per-

[a] *Godwin's Pol. Juſt.* vol. i. p. 126. See Dr. Parr's note upon this remark in his Spital Sermon, p. 41.

ſons, places [b]; all theſe are provided for by the very occaſion that occurs, be it what it may. The moſt untutored peaſant muſt know, for he muſt *feel*, that under any trouble or affliction he would wiſh to be treated kindly, and under all circumſtances whatſoever, juſtly and fairly. Nor could the *obligation* be doubtful: we *muſt* be ſure, that we ſhould think others morally obliged to help us and to ſerve us under certain given circumſtances, and therefore this ſenſe of *their* obligation ſhould point out to us our own duty. It is remarkable beſides, how in this precept, the ſelfiſh and philanthropic ſyſtems, upon which there has been ſo much

[b] "This is a peculiar advantage of this rule, (inferring the "excellent wiſdom and goodneſs of him who framed it,) that by "it very eaſily and certainly we may diſcern all the ſpecialties "of our duty, without looking abroad, or having recourſe to ex-"ternal inſtructions; ſo that by it we may be perfect law-"givers, and ſkilful judges, and faithful monitors to ourſelves "of what in any caſe we ſhould do. For every one by internal "experience knoweth what it is to love himſelf; every one is "conſcious how he uſeth to treat himſelf; each one conſe-"quently can preſcribe and decide for himſelf, what he ought to "do toward his neighbour; ſo that we are not only Θεοδίδακτοι, "*taught of God*, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *to love one another*, but "αὐτοδίδακτοι, taught of ourſelves how to exerciſe that duty." *Barrow's Sermons*, vol. i. 337.

diſpute,

diſpute, are here blended together. Univerſal benevolence is not left to depend on any ſuch viſionary notions, as that ſelf and kindred[c], friends and relations, are to be paſſed over: here it is left to originate in *ſelf*, which, for wiſe purpoſes, and not for the encouragement of any extravagant or excluſive ſelf-love[d], has been rendered of the moſt intereſting importance to us; ſo that in making ſelf the object of every ſocial duty, by ſuch a ſuppoſed change of circumſtances, what would otherwiſe be relative becomes perſonal; and our own feelings are made the judge, and our own rights and claims the meaſure of every duty; and the ſanction which the holy Goſpel has provided is moſt appropriate; "*For with the ſame meaſure that ye mete withal, it ſhall be meaſured to you again.*" Luke vi. 38.

But through what intricate roads and perplexed ways muſt we travel to arrive at this precept, metaphyſically! that is, according to the modern method of tracing

[c] See a long note in *Lloyd's Chriſtian Theology*, p. 232, publiſhed 1804; *Hall's Diſcourſe on Modern Infidelity*, p. 61. 6th edit.; and *Fuller's Goſpel its own Witneſs*, p. 30.

[d] See *Fuller on Deiſm*, pp. 50, 51. 2d edit.

out

out the principles of morality. Our ſenſations muſt firſt be analyſed, then our powers of reflection; and it is a great chance if our enquiries do not terminate in ſuch ſcepticiſm as tends to the denial of both. Our relation to other beings muſt undergo ſuch a ſcrutiny, that, inſtead of being made clear and convincing, we ſhall loſe perhaps much of our conviction, that we are even related to ourſelves. Whatever fitneſs or unfitneſs may appear in ſuch or ſuch actions, we may not depend on them, till we have aſcertained, not only the faculty by which ſuch fitneſs or unfitneſs is perceived, but whether, after all, the fitneſs or unfitneſs be in the actions themſelves, or only in our own minds. But it would be endleſs to purſue theſe matters further, and it is fit that I ſhould come to a concluſion.

Human knowledge is of the utmoſt importance, and we may well contemplate its progreſs with admiration and delight: we may well rejoice in that ſpirit of reſearch and enquiry, which may truly be ſaid to have diſtinguiſhed the age we live in; that inſatiable curioſity, that critical ſagacity, that nice diſcernment, that indefatigable induſ-

try,

try, which have been of late applied with ſo much effect, and ſo much benefit, to natural philoſophy in all its branches, and which never were, nor ever I think can be, exceeded. But let us not fancy, that, becauſe ſo much is doing, and ſo much has been found to do, in ſome particular branches of knowledge, nothing has been done in others, in times paſt. "In *this* part of knowledge, in *divine* "*philoſophy*," ſays the great Lord Bacon, in his moſt curious eſtimate of the learning of *his* times, "ſo far from noting any deficien-"cy, I rather note an exceſs." And the remark is but too applicable to the times in which *we* live. In religion and morality there is no deficiency; no room for improvement, no want of the aid and ſupport of human philoſophy. To apply the words of an excellent writer, "Chriſtianity, iſſuing "perfect and entire from the hands of its "Author, will admit of no mutilations, nor "any improvement. It is dogmatic; not "capable of being advanced with the pro-"greſs of ſcience, but fixed and immutable[e]."

[e] See *Hall's Faſt Sermon*, and *Lloyd's Chriſtian Theology*, pp. 65, 66.

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Let us never then be induced to abandon this great light, to follow after the phantoms of a diſputatious philoſophy. Let the philoſopher purſue his reſearches into the things of the earth; let him inveſtigate the ſtructure of the globe, or carry his views upward to thoſe parts of the univerſe which the Almighty ſeems in ſome degree to have ſubmitted to his notice and inſpection: but let him be content to ſtudy *man*, as a moral and accountable being, in the *word* of God alone, who *made man:* let him be content to learn from thence, what only the *word* of God himſelf could ever have ſatisfactorily diſcloſed to us, the ways of *his* providence, and the perfections of *his* nature.

NOTES

NOTES TO SERMON VIII.

Page 448. *note* (1).

So much has been ſaid and written upon the ſubject of the ſufficiency of human Reaſon to diſcover a rule of life, &c.] It ſeems to me to be a great abuſe of terms, to talk of the *ſufficiency* of human Reaſon to diſcover a rule of life, where we can intend no more than its *competency* to do ſo. That human Reaſon, by a long courſe of experience and obſervation, may attain to a juſt diſcrimination of right and wrong, and to the diſcovery of a proper rule of life, as far as precept goes, I ſhall not give myſelf the trouble to diſpute; becauſe it would prove nothing againſt the original neceſſity of a divine Revelation. When we talk of the *ſufficiency* of human Reaſon for moral and religious purpoſes, we ought to be able to ſhew, that human Reaſon, beſides being *competent* to ſuch diſcoveries in time, was *originally ſufficient* for theſe ends, both in point of time, and with a view to every occaſion that might ariſe for the exerciſe and application of Reaſon. Thoſe moſt diſpoſed to queſtion the hiſtory of the Bible, are yet very fond of going back to the origin of the ſpecies, and of tracing the progreſs of Reaſon from a ſtate of complete ignorance, to one of ample refinement and information: in which, not content to tell us what *may* have been man's *firſt* thoughts, they uniformly inſiſt upon telling us what they *muſt* have been: and if we will take their words for it, they appear to have been neither honourable to God, nor ſerviceable to man. Lord Bolingbroke, Mr. Hume, and Rouſſeau have all agreed, that Polytheiſm muſt have been man's firſt religion, Idolatry his firſt worſhip. But Reaſon muſt have been a bad miniſter or inſtructor, if ſhe could not at the very

firſt

firſt keep him from ſuch groſs errors. Diderot, indeed, in his *Syſtême de la Nature*, has lately undertaken to prove, not only that polytheiſm muſt have been, in *the early ages of the world*, the natural reſult of men's obſervation of nature; but that it muſt be much more ſo *now*, that *the courſe and progreſs of philoſophy has tended to remove men's prejudices*. This is to rob us even of the advantages Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Hume would promiſe us, from the *cultivation* of our Reaſon; the latter having aſſured us, that the true principles of Theiſm, or the belief of one almighty and wiſe Being, the Creator, the Preſerver and Ruler of heaven and earth, reſults from the greateſt improvements of the underſtanding in *philoſophy* and *ſcience:* and though the former pretends, that it requires "*cultivated talents*" to diſcover the unity and exiſtence of God; yet he ſays, that to minds enlightened by *learning* and *philoſophy*, this tenet flows ſo *naturally* from a conſideration of God's works, that "it is plain enough, that the know-"ledge of the one true God would have been acquired "by men, and would have been preſerved in the world, "if no ſuch people as the Jews had ever been." But we ſee, that even in the 18th century of Chriſtianity, this is not the neceſſary fruit of the application of Reaſon and "cultivated talents" to the ſtudy of nature; and therefore Lord Bolingbroke was very premature, at leaſt, though he wrote in times of great refinement, in aſſerting ſo ſtrongly as he does, that "the tables of "natural law are hung up in the works of God, and "are ſo obvious, that no man who is able to read the "plaineſt characters can miſtake them." And again, that "the wiſdom, as well as power, that appears in "the whole conſtruction, order, and harmony of the "univerſe, *muſt* have carried, at all times, the ſame ge-"neral conviction into the breaſt of every man who "obſerved, and reflected on his own obſervations."

As to the morals of a people, whoſe religion was of neceſſity polytheiſm, and worſhip, idolatry, I confeſs I am not ſolicitous to be informed what they were; becauſe I am perſuaded, that beſides the great chance of their being very incorrect, if no revelation was given at firſt, and the Bible account is not authentic, we know nothing at all about the firſt beginning of things; and

that

that the mere conjectures even of a Bolingbroke and Hume are of no more importance than the fancies and reveries of the moſt *plebeian philoſophers* that ever exiſted. The *ſufficiency* of Reaſon, however, is out of the queſtion, certainly, if it was not ſufficient at the very firſt to guide man to the truth, *omnipotent truth*; on which, according to Mr. Godwin, the whole order and harmony of the univerſe, moral and phyſical, is to depend. For Reaſon could never have been otherwiſe than the moſt diſtinguiſhing faculty of man's nature; and therefore, to ſuppoſe it not ſufficient to preſerve man from error at the firſt beginning of things, is, I think, to acknowledge it to be totally inſufficient; and even worſe, to be the very occaſion of leading us aſtray. For, as Cicero has well obſerved, that as in phyſic it matters nothing whether a diſeaſe be ſuch, as that no man *does*, or no man *can*, recover from it; ſo neither does it make any difference, whether by philoſophy no man *is*, or no man *can* be, made wiſe or good.—"*non* "*intelligo quid interſit, utrum nemo ſit ſapiens, an nemo* "*eſſe poſſit.*" *De Nat. Deor.* lib. iii. So to pretend, that Reaſon is ſufficient to diſcover all that man needs to know of religion and morality; and yet, that for ages and ages man was not in a condition to make ſuch a uſe of his Reaſon, is abſurd and prepoſterous. To talk of a remote and ſpeculative, where a proximate and practical *ſufficiency* is required, (to uſe the words of an excellent writer upon the very ſubject,) is no anſwer to the difficulty. "Could ſo wiſe, ſo righteous, and merciful "a Being as God is, bring millions of creatures into "life, with ſuch a poor proviſion for their happineſs, as "that not one in ten thouſand ſhould be likely to ob-"tain it? This is ſo near akin to an *abſolute inſuffi-*"*ciency*, that it cannot fail to bear hard on the perfec-"tions of God." See a Tract on the *Strength and Weakneſs of Reaſon*, London, 1737, 2d edit.

To reject Revelation, and yet to regard Reaſon as a faculty, which was originally deſigned to depend on the gradual developement of truth, to ſo great a degree, as that neither the nature of God nor the nature of man ſhould have been diſcoverable for many ages, is to rate the uſe of Reaſon and the importance of truth ſo low, as to make them of far leſs conſideration than the

the gratification of the appetites, and the purſuit of objects, which we enjoy in common with the brute creation. But that Reaſon ſhould have been abuſed in the courſe of ages, and truth obſcured, and revealed knowledge abandoned and loſt, is nothing wonderful in the hiſtory of man; and therefore, though I think it abſurd to ſuppoſe, that man's intellectual powers were originally ſo weak, or ſo depraved, as to hurry him headlong into error; yet, that ſince the fall this has been the character of human Reaſon, and that from the very firſt it was *liable* to be depraved, I am far from denying.

All that we read of the polytheiſm and idolatry of the early ages of the world, I firmly believe to have been, jointly with the evil effects of a moral depravity, the fruits of erroneous reaſoning upon the viſible works of nature. But what right have Deiſts and Infidels to aſſume, that this was the *primitive* ſtate of things? The Jewiſh records muſt be allowed to be of a certain age; and generally older, even upon the loweſt computation, than any other exiſting records of antiquity. I have already, I think, remarked, that they ſpeak of idolaters always as of thoſe who had *gone aſtray*; who had *abandoned* a *primitive religion*, and an *original* faith in *one ſupreme God*; who had "*turned aſide*," and "*become* fil-"thy, abominable, and corrupt." And it is not ill obſerved by Biſhop Warburton, though ſo contrary to the concluſions of Lord Bolingbroke, Mr. Hume, and others, that "idol worſhip has none of the appearances "of an original cuſtom; but has all the circumſtances "attending a depraved and corrupt inſtitution." *Div. Leg.* vol. i. 461.

But, beſides that the Bible thus ſpeaks of a pure religion, which prevailed anterior to idolatry, that ſo pure a theology as that of the Jews ſhould have prevailed in thoſe early ages, and in the midſt of idolatry, is a better proof of the real fact, than any that mere reaſoning and conjecture can ſupply: for the authors of the Sacred Books have certainly never been regarded by Deiſts as perſons of ſuch refined and "cultivated talents," as to be naturally ſuperior to their neighbours, much leſs to the ſages and philoſophers of Greece and Rome. Lord Bolingbroke expreſsly ſays, that "the notions of

"the

" the ſacred Penmen were plainly thoſe of an ignorant " people, and unphiloſophical ages." Mr. Hume, that the Bible is the work of " a barbarous and ignorant " people, wrote in an age when they were ſtill more " barbarous:" [what this means I do not pretend to diſcern.] And yet, all the tenets of theſe " ignorant " and barbarous" writers ſeem to be *immediately directed* againſt the moſt glaring errors of idolatry. In the Jewiſh theology we have no deified *elements*, no *terreſtrial*, *aërial*, or *aquatic* Gods. The God of the Hebrews is all in all. " The *earth* is his, and all that " therein is."—" It is the Lord that commandeth the " *waters*; it is the glorious God that maketh the *thunder*. " It is the Lord that ruleth the *ſea*."—" He giveth *rain* " upon the earth, and ſendeth *waters* upon the fields."—" He viſiteth the *earth*, and bleſſeth it; he maketh it " very plenteous: he *watereth* her furrows, he ſendeth " *rain* into the valleys thereof: he maketh it ſoft with " *drops* of rain, and bleſſeth the increaſe of it." Secondly, the God of the Hebrews, as Creator, is with a moſt emphatic diſtinction ſet high above the moſt glorious works of his own hands, which are allowed to have been the firſt objects of Gentile ſuperſtition. Such are the heavenly bodies; meteors; elementary principles; mountains, groves, and rivers; birds, beaſts, and reptiles; kings, and heroes; and above all, even the inviſible ſpirits, which, under various denominations, were ever ſuppoſed to exiſt without the boundaries of this world. The cxlviiith Pſalm alone would ſeem to be expreſsly directed againſt *all* ſuch errors. " O praiſe " the Lord of heaven, praiſe him in the height. Praiſe " him, all ye ANGELS of his; praiſe him, all his HOST. " Praiſe him, SUN and MOON; praiſe him, all ye STARS " and LIGHT. Praiſe him, all ye HEAVENS, and ye " WATERS that are above the heavens. For HE ſpake " the word, and they were MADE; HE commanded, " and they were CREATED. Praiſe the Lord upon " earth, ye DRAGONS and all DEEPS: FIRE and HAIL, " SNOW and VAPOURS, WIND and STORM, fulfilling " his word; MOUNTAINS and all HILLS; fruitful " TREES and all CEDARS; BEASTS and all CATTLE; " WORMS and FEATHERED FOWLS; KINGS of the " EARTH, and all people; princes, and all judges of

"the world." Thirdly, that great and prevailing error, common in the *Eaſt* particularly, namely, the doctrine of two coeval and coequal principles of good and evil, light and darkneſs, is in the Jewiſh records peculiarly ſet aſide; "I am the Lord, there is none "elſe; there is no God beſide me. I form the LIGHT, "and create DARKNESS; I make PEACE, and create "EVIL." Iſaiah xlv. To which Biſhop Lowth adds, and ſurely with reaſon, ver. 19. "I have not ſpoken in "SECRET, in the DARK PLACE of the earth;" not like the ancient oracles, ſuch as the Cumæan Sybil, *Virg.* Æn. vi. 42. and the oracle at Delphi. See *Strabo* and *Diod. Sic.* And again, in oppoſition to the equivocal and falſe anſwers of the heathen oracles, "I am "Jehovah, who ſpeak TRUTH, who give DIRECT "ANSWERS."

In all theſe paſſages it is ſurely not too much to ſay, that there is a marked oppoſition to the moſt groſs errors of Paganiſm, very ſtriking and particular. In regard to the SUN and FIRE alone, (if not the ſame object of worſhip,) this tends to exclude perhaps the *Oſiris* of the Egyptians; the *Mithras* of the Perſians; the *Jupiter* and *Apollo* of Greece; the *Serapis* of Egypt; the *Ormus* and *Oromazes* of Perſia; the *Veſta* and *Vulcan* of Rome. The records themſelves, from which we extract theſe paſſages, declare, that the Creator revealed himſelf at firſt to Adam, the parent of the human kind; and afterwards to Abraham, particularly called forth from a nation of idolaters. In either caſe, whether to guard man at firſt from the deluſions of error, or afterwards to withdraw him from the abominations of idolatry, the interpoſition of the Creator was ſurely not without reaſon, and particularly conſiſtent with his brighteſt attributes of goodneſs and beneficence. Lord Bolingbroke, I know, acknowledges that the unity of God was known and believed in the world previous to the vocation of Abraham; but not by any means by way of corroborating the Scripture account of a primitive Revelation to Adam; but, on the contrary, expreſsly to prove, that it was *not* a tenet *peculiar* to the Iſraelites. And though in the following paſſage he would ſeem to allow the neceſſity of a Revelation; "For," ſays his Lordſhip, "without Revelation the unity of

"God

" God could not be the primitive faith of any one peo-
" ple, till obſervation and meditation, till a full and
" vigorous exerciſe of reaſon, made it ſuch. By conſi-
" dering the phenomena ſeparately, men could not ar-
" rive at a knowledge of the one Supreme Being; and
" ſuch men as we ſpeak of (the race of Adam, &c.)
" were not capable of taking a comprehenſive view of
" the harmony of the whole." *Phil. Works*, Eſſay ii.
Yet, in another place, he takes care to tell us, that
" we have nothing to do with the antediluvian world."
This is an eaſy way of ſetting aſide the teſtimony of
the Scriptures certainly, but a very clumſy way of
proving them falſe: for they ſpeak not of the doctrine
of the Unity as the diſcovery of obſervation and medi-
tation, but of direct and immediate revelation: and
what right can Lord Bolingbroke or any Deiſt have
to ſay, that it did not originate as Moſes has related?

The dull minds of the Jews, which they advert to
ſo often, can only ſerve to increaſe our ſurpriſe at the
correct theology of their ſacred records. The learned
Dr. Campbell reminds Mr. Hume of an aſſertion he
has made in his works, " that if a traveller were tranſ-
" ported into any unknown region, and found the inha-
" bitants ignorant and barbarous, he might before-
" hand declare them idolaters; and there is ſcarce a
" poſſibility of their being miſtaken." " I know,"
ſays Dr. Campbell, " no ſatisfactory account that can
" be given of the exception of the Jews, on the prin-
" ciples of the Eſſayiſt. Nevertheleſs, nothing is more
" eaſy, than to give a ſatisfactory account of it, on the
" Chriſtian principles. This account is that which is
" given in the Bible itſelf. It is, that the religious te-
" nets of that nation were not the reſult of their rea-
" ſonings, but proceeded from divine Revelation. The
" contraſt we diſcern between the Iſraelites and the
" ancient Greeks and Romans is remarkable: the
" Greeks and Romans, on all the ſubjects of human eru-
" dition, on all the liberal and the uſeful arts, reaſoned
" like *men*; on the ſubject of religion, they prated like
" *children*. The Iſraelites, on the contrary, in all the
" ſciences and arts, were *children*; but in their notions
" of religion they were *men:* in the doctrines, for ex-
" ample, of the unity, the eternity, the omnipotence,

" the omniſcience, the omnipreſence, the wiſdom, and " the goodneſs of God; in their opinions concerning " providence, and the creation, preſervation, and go- " vernment of the world; opinions ſo exalted and " comprehenſive, as even by Mr. Hume's own acknow- " ledgment could never enter into the thoughts of " Barbarians." *Campbell on Miracles*, ſect. vii.

I have dwelt the longer on this, becauſe if there is any point in diſpute between infidels and believers, in which the former appear to have turned their own weapons againſt themſelves, it is, I think, this particular one, of the ſufficiency of human Reaſon. They firſt object to the utility of Revelation, becauſe of the *ſufficiency* of human Reaſon to diſcover, not only a rule of life, but the nature of God, and the methods of his providence; and yet, by their *own* account, ſo inſufficient does it appear to have been, in the firſt ages of the world, that for many generations error *muſt* have taken place of truth; and for no other reaſon, but becauſe in thoſe firſt ages of the world, while ignorance and barbariſm prevailed, men *could not* diſcover the *true nature* of God, or the ways of his providence. They will not admit, that God did reveal himſelf to man at the origin of things, becauſe polytheiſm and idolatry appear to them to have been the firſt religion and worſhip of mankind; and becauſe, as mankind were at firſt uniformly ignorant and barbarous, it could not have been otherwiſe; nothing but a divine revelation being ſufficient to diſcover to them the moſt important truths of religion, the unity of God in particular. Thus the *ſufficiency* of Reaſon is held to be proved, by *a poſitive acknowledgment of its inſufficiency*; and the inutility of Revelation demonſtrated, by a *clear confeſſion* of its *abſolute neceſſity*. Beſides which, polytheiſm and idolatry are aſſumed to be the primitive religion of the world, in poſitive contradiction to the oldeſt hiſtory of the world extant; and thoſe very religious truths, which they declare to have been not diſcoverable by an ignorant and barbarous people, nor otherwiſe than by expreſs Revelation, the unity of God particularly, are found in the books of a nation particularly ſtigmatized by Infidels themſelves for their ignorance and barbariſm, and referred by the authors of thoſe books, not

to

to their own diſcoveries, but to an *expreſs revelation* of God.

If any perſons would wiſh to ſatisfy themſelves of the indiſpenſable neceſſity of a divine Revelation in the firſt ages of the world, upon the Infidel's own view of things, I would refer them at once to *Mr. Hume's Natural Hiſtory of Religion.* This treatiſe never fails to make the ſame impreſſion upon my mind; an impreſſion as contrary as poſſible, in all likelihood, to the author's intentions: and as I do not like to be deceived by ſuch impreſſions, I have been made happy, by finding that it has appeared exactly in the ſame light to writers of diſtinguiſhed eminence. Dr. Maclaine in particular, in his *Letters to Mr. Soame Jenyns*, expreſsly remarks, "that perhaps *no book* is *more adapted* to ſhew the unſpeakable advantages of a divine "Revelation." P. 220. As for the ſufficiency of human Reaſon, where polytheiſm and idolatry have prevailed, Infidels themſelves have given it up, as has already been ſhewn; and they could not ſurely have done otherwiſe. See the abſurdities of polytheiſm well expoſed by the Apologetical Fathers of the Church, particularly *Arnobius* and *Lactantius*.

The abſurdities of *idolatry*, beſides the many admirable deſcriptions of them to be found in different parts of the holy Scriptures, cannot be more fully diſplayed, than in the Epiſtle aſcribed to the prophet Jeremiah, at the end of the book of Baruch. As to the extravagances of Paganiſm, that is, of natural religion, ſee *Biſhop Gibſon's Second Paſtoral Letter*; and the 2d part of *Dr. Nichols's Conference with a Theiſt.* Indeed they have been ſo often expoſed, and with ſo much effect, that it is not at all neceſſary to dwell upon the ſubject. Two things only I would obſerve, namely, that if Reaſon was not ſufficient to inſtruct Pagans in the higher truths of religion in the infancy of the world, it ought at leaſt to have been ſufficient to have preſerved them from ſuch groſs errors, if the book of nature had been ſo generally legible as Infidels pretend; and ſecondly, that if the light of nature was ſo ſufficient as others inſiſt, the errors of the Gentile world can be only attributed to their great perverſeneſs; and their numberleſs abominations will be leſs excuſable by far than the Bi-

ble (which is often accuſed of great uncharitableneſs in this particular) would repreſent them to be. For though it is true, that it appears to have been, according to the Bible, God's peculiar care, by his prophets and miniſters, often to ſet before the wicked the errors of their ways, that they might be converted and live; yet, what the Scriptures repreſent to have been done only on ſpecial occaſions, Deiſts would pretend to be always the caſe: and where the Scriptures allow for man's weakneſſes, and provide a ſpecial remedy for his lapſe, Deiſts often inſiſt upon the *irreſiſtible* light of Nature; and in ſo doing leave no plea for the tranſgreſſor. The Scripture makes allowance for thoſe who have had no means of "knowing their Maſter's will;" and have aſſured us, that *they* "ſhall be beaten with few ſtripes." But many Deiſts inſiſt, that all have the means of fully knowing their Maſter's will; and therefore leave no room for ſuch a mitigation of puniſhment. See this admirably argued by Dr. Leland, in many parts of his *Anſwer to Chriſtianity as old as the Creation.*

In regard then to *morals:* if, as Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Hume have ſuppoſed, the human race muſt have ſet out with erroneous notions as to religion, Reaſon in its rude and uncultivated ſtate being not only by their accounts inſufficient to inſtruct them in the more ſublime truths of religion; but inſufficient beſides to *ſecure them from the groſſeſt errors and abſurdities of ſuperſtition and idolatry*; it would be unreaſonable to ſuppoſe they could have been much better off in regard to moral inſtruction and information. Lord Bolingbroke acknowledges, that "experience and obſervation," which according to him would appear to have been their only means of inſtruction, "require time; and Reaſon, that "collects from them, and is improved by them, comes "ſlowly to our aſſiſtance." I believe a greater truth could not be advanced; Rouſſeau particularly inſiſts upon it; "L'une des acquiſitions de l'homme, et même "des *plus lentes*, eſt la Raiſon." But if nature is at all uniform, and man the ſame now as at firſt, (and if he is not, how can Deiſts pretend to argue the matter? for it is only the book of God that tells us otherwiſe,) I ſee not how it was poſſible, conſiſtently with the goodneſs we generally aſcribe to the Supreme Being, that man ſhould

ſhould be left to wait the iſſue of this *ſlow* examination of nature, aided only by ſuch a *cautious* and *dilatory* auxiliary as Reaſon, by their own acknowledgment, muſt ever have been. If all things now poſſible were poſſible at firſt, (and what have Deiſts who diſown Revelation to allege to the contrary?) ſurely moral ills of the blackeſt malignity might have prevailed, before Reaſon and experience could have fortified man againſt temptations, even perhaps to the extinction of the ſpecies. Lord Bolingbroke thinks this was provided againſt by the very principle I ſhould myſelf have fixed on, as the moſt likely to ſeduce man into error. Admitting that Reaſon would come too ſlowly to man's aſſiſtance, he adds, "but then, God implanted in all "men the principle of *ſelf-love*; and this prompting "him continually to ſeek *his own happineſs*, ſecures his "conformity to the laws of nature." A ſtranger principle ſurely could not have been fixed on to ſecure man's virtue; for certainly nothing ſo *commonly* tends to inflame the paſſions and bewilder the reaſon, as this very principle of ſelf-love: [ſee *Pope's Eſſay on Man*, Epiſt. iii. 269.] which Lord Bolingbroke in another place ſeems (as much as his friend Mr. Pope) to be aware of; for he ſays, that "while the paſſions are for "*ever active*, and eaſily excited by every object of *ap*-"*parent* good, Reaſon all the time is a *ſluggard*, which "cannot be ſo excited, but muſt be *willed* into ac-"tion: and as this can rarely happen when the will "is already determined by affections and paſſions, ſo "when it does happen, a ſort of compoſition takes "place; and if affections and paſſions cannot govern "abſolutely, nor ſubject Reaſon to ſerve as their in-"ſtrument, they *require* and *obtain* more indulgence "from her than they deſerve, or than ſhe would ſhew "them, if ſhe was entirely free from their force, and "from their ſeduction." Now ſurely a principle, which particularly ſets in motion thoſe paſſions and affections, which are always ſtruggling to get the better of Reaſon, and reſtrain and circumſcribe her power, even where they cannot ſubdue her, is a ſtrange ſubſtitute for Reaſon herſelf. And I believe we have in the book of Geneſis the moſt rational account that could be given of the firſt operations of this active principle, and

of its fatal triumph over Reaſon; a victory, from which Reaſon never has recovered. From that time to this, ſelf-love, with her numberleſs paſſions and deſires, has been warring againſt the ſoul, and againſt Reaſon too. And if we take a view of Infidel philoſophy at this very time, I think it will appear, that even "*the remote and ſpecu-*" *lative*" ſufficiency of Reaſon is as queſtionable as the "*proximate and practical.*"

Some of the Pagan philoſophers of *ancient* times had certainly, by *their ſpeculative ſufficiency of Reaſon*, attained to ſome of the moſt ſublime precepts of the Goſpel-morality. Even in regard to the regulation of the heart and thoughts of man:

"Nam ſcelus inter ſe tacitum qui cogitat ullum,"

ſays Juvenal,

"Facti crimen habet." Sat. xiii. 209.

Democritus alſo *in Sententiis*; "Ἀγαθὸν οὐ τὸ μὴ ἀδικεῖν, "ἀλλὰ τὸ μηδὲν ΕΘΕΛΕΙΝ." And again, "Δόκιμος ἀνὴρ καὶ "ἀδόκιμος ἐκ ἐξ ὧν πράσσει μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ὧν ΒΟΥΛΕΤΑΙ." It is true theſe maxims could not have the authority of a revealed law, becauſe of the doubts they were under in regard to the Being who was to take cognizance of the "*tacitum ſcelus*;" but the maxim itſelf is certainly ſound and good. Nevertheleſs the Pagan philoſophers of *modern* times have ſhewn a diſpoſition to diſmiſs it from their codes; and M. Volney in particular has aſſerted it to be a "*law* of *Nature*," that there is "no "crime or merit in *intention*." And, for the credit of modern philoſophy, I cannot forbear to add his ſpeculative proof of this negation. "For," ſays he, "it is "only an idea, without reality." See the fourth chapter of his *Law of Nature*; which an *Engliſh* editor is pleaſed to call "the Catechiſm of Good Senſe and Good "People." What would Juvenal have given to have lived in *ſuch* an *age* of *Reaſon!* or Cicero; for *Cicero's good ſenſe* was not of *this* ſtamp: Nature and Reaſon both taught *him* a different leſſon. "Quam ſimilitudi-"nem," ſays he, ſpeaking of the beauty and ſymmetry of *objects* of *ſenſe*, "NATURA, RATIOque, ab ocu-"lis ad *animum* transferens, multo etiam magis pulchri-"tudinem, conſtantiam, ordinem in CONSILIIS factiſ-"que conſervandum putat: cavetque ne quid indecore

"effœ-

" effœminateve faciat: tum in omnibus et OPINIONI-
" BUS et factis, ne quid *libidinoſe* aut faciat aut COGI-
" TET." *De Offic.* lib. i. c. 4. But Mr. Hume, following the opinion of a French philoſopher, aſſures the world, that " if we would obtain all the advantages of " life, *adultery* muſt be practiſed: that female *infidelity*, " when known, is a ſmall thing; when unknown, no-" thing." Such is the progreſs the age has made in *Ethics:* ſuch the *ſpeculative ſufficiency* of Reaſon in theſe days to diſcover a *rule* of *life:* ſuch the ſuperiority of our modern philoſophy to that of the times of Cicero and Juvenal. And it ſhould be noticed, that this is an AGE of HONOUR as well as REASON; ſo that where there has been found a ſufficiency of *Reaſon* to countenance *adultery*, there has been found an equal ſufficiency of *Honour* to excuſe *infidelity*. But it would be endleſs to purſue this compariſon further; nor do I think it at all neceſſary. Whoever wiſhes to have a correct view of " the immorality and abſurdity of Deiſm," and of " the nature and danger of Infidel philoſophy," may without much expence gratify their wiſhes, and acquire much valuable information, from two modern publications upon the ſubject, both I think *tranſatlantic:* the one by Mr. Fuller, entitled *The Goſpel its own Witneſs*; the 2d edit. publiſhed in 1800: the other, *Two Diſcourſes* addreſſed to the candidates for the *Baccalaureate* in *Yale* College, 1797, by Dr. Dwight, Preſident of the College. This work has ſeen three editions, and well deſerves it.

Page 456. *note* (2).

I only require every man to determine for himſelf, from the dictates of his own heart, and his own feelings, whether it is at all probable, or even poſſible, that any principle of univerſal obligation, and unqueſtionable authority, can be diſcovered and put in force by mere human Reaſon.] Long ago Lactantius decided this queſtion by an argument, that I think can never be refuted. Speaking expreſsly of the Pagan ſyſtems of philoſophy, compared with Chriſtianity, he ſays, " Quid ergo? Nihilne illi " ſimile præcipiunt? Immo permulta: et ad verum " frequenter accedunt: ſed nihil *ponderis* habent illa " præcepta, quia ſunt *humana*; et auctoritate majori, " id

" id eſt divina illa carent. Nemo igitur credit; quia " tam ſe hominem putat eſſe qui audit, quam eſt ille " qui præcipit." *Inſtitut.* lib. iii. 27. Nothing more true could be ſaid upon the ſubject, as far as regards human laws and ſyſtems of philoſophy; and his illuſtrations of the point are very good. Neither legiſlator nor philoſopher can ever reach the *heart*. The edict of the legiſlator, and the precept of the philoſopher, muſt equally depend, for their effect, on circumſtances totally out of the reach of either. No power of man can reſtrain an *Atheiſt* from a *ſecret ſin*. But it is ſaid, what men cannot do to reſtrain their fellow men, nature *can*. The moral ſenſe, the love of virtue for its own ſake, the fear of diſgrace, the viſible order and harmony of the univerſe, are capable, we are told, of enforcing the laws of morality, though it ſhould be granted, that there is no God: " etiamſi daremus, non eſſe Deum, " aut non curari ab eo negotia humana." This might do for ſuch moraliſts as *Machiavel*, *Hobbes*, *Toland*, and *Bayle:* but we ſhould ſcarce have expected to find it in Grotius; from whoſe writings, however, we have extracted the paſſage juſt cited. See the Prolegomena to his work *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, §. 11. It is a doctrine not defenſible in philoſophy, and can never therefore be advanced by Deiſts, but to weaken the authority of divine Revelation.

It is an abſurdity to ſuppoſe an *Atheiſt* would be *reſtrained* by any ſpeculative notion, however he might be diſpoſed to ſubmit in common life to the ſtanding laws of ſociety: and I think we are obliged to M. Bayle for ſupplying us with an argument againſt himſelf, when he tells us what his own ſecurity would be againſt the evil machinations of an Atheiſt. He would rely on the Atheiſt doing him no ſecret injury, through fear of diſcovering the ſecret in his ſleep, or in the delirium of a fever. Againſt truſting to *ſuch* a ſecurity, men need not, I think, be much cautioned. But indeed Biſhop Warburton has ſhewn it to be a principle juſt as likely to act in an *oppoſite manner* upon the mind of an Atheiſt: for, ſays he, very properly, this might juſt as well prevent the Atheiſt from acting *virtuouſly*, even in public, and the ſight of men, leſt in his ſleep he ſhould tell the truth, and let all the world know, that he acted only

only from a ſelfiſh vanity, and a deſire to be thought better than he really was. Surely *this* contingency might alarm him as much as the other, if *a regard to reputation* is to be held ſufficient to *reſtrain* him from acts of immorality: for he muſt be ſuppoſed to have an equal dread of rendering himſelf in any other way contemptible and ridiculous, which certainly ſuch an accident could not fail to be the occaſion of. But in getting rid of the utility of Revelation, the Deiſt inſiſts upon the law of *nature* being the law of *God*, and therefore obligatory enough to be binding on all Theiſts at leaſt, who may reaſonably be thought to compoſe the majority of mankind. But if this be true, ſo far from proving the inutility of a particular Revelation, it ſupplies us, I think, with two very ſtrong reaſons for the peculiar *neceſſity* of a divine Revelation: for what is the law of nature, which our *paſſions* and *appetites* often point to? Is it a law ſo preciſe and determinate, that no one Theiſt can interpret it differently from another? Are the licentious and the temperate equally obedient to the law of nature? Are the libertine and voluptuary, in the gratification of their *natural appetites*, to be allowed to think they are fulfilling the laws of God as truly as the chaſte and ſober? Is the law of nature, as a law of God, ſo accommodating to men's fancies, that to ſome adultery ſhall appear no crime, aſſaſſination no injury, revenge honourable, ſuicide glorious, abortion and infanticide politically juſt? All theſe have been conſidered by ſome *profeſſed* Theiſts to be, under certain circumſtances, no leſs than the *law* of *nature*, and conſequently the law of GOD; ſo contrary, I will venture to ſay, to the decided opinions of Theiſts in general, that the latter would never be brought to allow, that the volume of nature could poſſibly admit of any ſuch interpretation. It is enough to know however that ſome, who have not only been held to be in their ſober ſenſes, but who have been numbered among the *philoſophers* of the age, have *ſo read* the volume of nature. Could Theiſts ever be ſo divided about the interpretation of the ſixth, ſeventh, eighth, and tenth Commandments? Could any written law be liable to an abuſe like this? Yet to ſuch abuſe the law of nature ever is and ever has been liable.

M. Volney

M. Volney himſelf acknowledges, that the great maſs of mankind (for ſo I think *the ignorant*, whom he ſpeaks of, comparatively are, and always will be) "are "liable every inſtant to commit miſtakes, the moſt per- "nicious to themſelves or others."—"Above 3000 "years ſince," ſays he, "the wiſeſt of men obſerved, "that the number of fools is infinite; and the world "has not changed." And when he is aſked, how it happens that *philoſophers* deceive themſelves, his anſwer is, "From their nature as men." And yet, if God has given us no other law but the law of nature, we have no interpreters of that law but men; who by a diſtinct law of nature, it ſeems, are for ever liable to be deceived: for this is M. Volney's own aſſertion, which he repeats in another place: "Man is ignorant by na- "ture; and ignorance is an obſtacle in the way of all "her laws."—"Are ignorance and folly *common?*" is another queſtion of his celebrated Catechiſm. The anſwer is, "Yes, very common; they are the habitual "and general diſeaſes of mankind." This is the opinion of one who thinks the law of nature the only law of God; while, by his own confeſſion, the number of thoſe who are amenable to it, and yet incapable of learning their duty from it, is now, and ever has been, infinite! Surely, ſince all profeſſed Deiſts are ſo inclined to look to the law of nature as the only meaſure of their duty, it ſhould have occurred to them, that a good and gracious God could not but be ſenſible of the imperfection of a law, which the ignorant cannot comprehend, and the wiſe may ſo continually miſtake.

But if Deiſts are ſincere in their belief of the ſuperintendence of an omniſcient and gracious Providence, they muſt ſurely be brought to ſee the great improbability alſo of man's being left to depend entirely on a law, that ſhould leave no difference between the Theiſt and the Atheiſt. When the Atheiſt once knows, that the law of nature is regarded as the only law of God, there is not an action of his life, in which he may not inſult his God, and make a mockery of man. Every compliance with the law of nature will gain him the credit of being a faithful and obedient ſervant of the moſt High; and then not even the ſanctity of an oath will ſecure the Theiſt from his deceptions. "Fruſtra

"quippe

" quippe jurando quis adigitur per Deum, quem non " credit, adeoque nec *metuit*," ſays Puffendorf; and Hobbes admits it in his work *De Cive*, c. ii. §. 21. And if we may take an Atheiſt's own word for the truſt we ought to repoſe in a perſon who has nothing to *fear*, Diderot himſelf aſſures us, that " Tout homme qui n'a " rien à craindre, devient bientôt méchant." Certainly, however, in regard to oaths and imprecations, in the caſe of an Atheiſt, the great God of heaven may be invoked to confirm any teſtimony, and his holy name profaned to ſanction any hypocritical pretence. And this, I think, may ſerve to prove not only the expediency of a written law, to which the Atheiſt ſhall be obliged to conform as well as the Theiſt, but the neceſſity alſo of ſome *arbitrary* laws, an habitual conformity to which may increaſe the ſecurity of the Theiſt. For though there may be no means entirely of guarding againſt hypocriſy in an Atheiſt; yet the more frequent occaſions there may be provided, for men to teſtify their belief in God, and in the immutable ſanctions of his righteous laws, the more ſecurity muſt neceſſarily ariſe to ſociety in general. Any man may profeſs to believe in God, to compaſs ſome particular end: but the Atheiſt's pretence of belief might be timely ſuſpected, if he was known to have paſſed his life in an habitual contempt of God's ſabbath, and other holy inſtitutions. I would not ſay any thing to render man more ſuſpicious than neceſſary of his neighbour: but our habitual *truſt* and *confidence* in *God* can never, I think, be rendered certain to man, but by an open and uninterrupted courſe of rational *devotion*. For while the Atheiſt may have many motives to be virtuous without religion, it muſt coſt him great pains, even to pretend to be religious without virtue: that " ſervice" to God, which, having the conſent of the heart and ſoul, is to the true Chriſtian " perfect free- " dom," would to the Atheiſt be the hardeſt and moſt hateful bondage, a burthen moſt intolerable. I confeſs, without external devotion, and even inſtituted forms of devotion, I know no means of diſtinguiſhing between a Theiſt and an Atheiſt: I would not confound them without neceſſity; but it is incumbent on the Deiſt to teach us how to diſtinguiſh them. Even Polybius could

could acknowledge the beneficial effects of religious inſtitutions, to ſupport the ſanctity of oaths; which, he ſays, were more binding upon the Romans, who publicly worſhipped the Gods, and believed the doctrine of future puniſhments, than ten written ſureties among the Greeks, with as many ſeals, and twice as many witneſſes: *ἀντιγραφεῖς δέκα, καὶ σφραγίδας τοσαύτας καὶ μάρτυρας διπλασίους.* Ἱστορ. Λ. ϛ'. edit. Baſil. 192.

As to the ſuperiority of ſanctions and motives, in the caſe of a revealed religion and a written law, it cannot poſſibly be queſtioned. Natural religion is groſsly deficient both in regard to ſanctions and to motives; to ſanctions, becauſe no obſervation of nature, no contemplation of the viſible ſcene of things, can poſſibly aſſure us of a future ſtate, that is, of rewards or puniſhment to come; in regard to motives, becauſe while revealed religion calls upon every man alike to "fear God "and keep his commandments," natural religion directs every man to do only what ſeemeth good in his *own* eyes: ſee Spinoſa, as cited by Dr. Leland in his *View of Deiſtical Writers*, Letter VI. vol. i. p. 85. 5th edit. Natural religion is undoubtedly a religion man makes for himſelf: "L'homme n'a qu'à conſulter *les déſirs de ſon cœur*, "pour ſavoir ce qu'il ſe doit à lui-même, et ce qu'il "doit aux autres;" ſays Diderot. He even goes ſo far as to aſſure us, "dès que le vice nous rend heureux, "il doit aimer le vice:" which, though not intended to encourage vice, is a dangerous maxim in the preſent ſtate of things. "Ce que Dieu veut," ſays Rouſſeau, "qu'un homme faſſe, il ne le lui fait pas dire par un "autre homme; il le lui dit lui-même, il l'écrit au "*fond de ſon cœur.*" I have only to conſult myſelf," he adds, "concerning what I ought to do. All that "I *feel* to be right is right. Whatever I *feel* to be "wrong is wrong. All the morality of our actions "lies in the judgment we ourſelves form of them." *Emile.* "It were to be wiſhed," ſays Mr. Godwin, "that no human being were obliged to do any thing "but from the dictates of his own underſtanding." And again, "the moſt natural and obvious of all pro-"ceedings, is for each man to be the ſovereign arbiter "of his own concerns." And a good deal to the ſame purpoſe in another place: "If I learn nothing but "what

" what I desire to learn, what should hinder me from " being my own preceptor?" Certainly nothing. Any dunce at school might answer this enquiry, I think; and any master of a school must see the wisdom of it. And yet I know not but this is a just description of the principle upon which every Deist embraces his natural religion in preference to Revelation. Each wishes to be his own preceptor; that is, according to Mr. Godwin's definition, " to learn nothing but what he him- " self desires to learn." Such persons may well be expected not to see, nor to acknowledge, the utility of a divine Revelation. As they will be their own instructors, no doubt they will also choose to be their own judges; and as they insist upon being a law unto themselves, we may be assured that self-gratification will be their chiefest motive, and the approbation of their own judgment their highest sanction. Compare the sanctions and motives of Christianity, as they are brought together in *Bishop Gibson's second Pastoral Letter*; see also *Ogden's XIVth Sermon on the Superiority of the Christian Religion over all other Religions*; and *Paley's Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*, b. ii. ch. 4. where he speaks of Mr. Hume's 4th Appendix to his principles of morals.

By what has been said, I am far from meaning to deny that there is a law of nature to which we are responsible; that there are natural sanctions provided by God to enforce this law; and that it was designed to lead us to every thing just and right. " What makes " then the evil, dangerous, and desperate doctrines of " natural religion?" Bishop Taylor, who puts this question, shall give the answer: " Not the obscurity of the " thing, but the cloud upon the heart: for say what " you will, he that hears must be the *expounder*; and " we can never suppose but a man will give sentence in " behalf of what he passionately loves." Men have differed so much in their *interpretations* of the law of nature, that there is now scarcely an immorality to be named, which the Deist may not find some *various reading* of the *volume* of nature, to justify; some accommodating *gloss*, to support him in it. I have already mentioned some gross violations of the law of nature, which philosophers of modern times have found means

means to vindicate; as adultery, aſſaſſination, ſuicide, abortion. Mr. Godwin (who poſitively declares not only that Alexander and Cæſar, but that Milton's Satan may be called *virtuous*, for reſenting the unjuſt inequality between him and God) thinks *robbers* generally act upon a perſuaſion in their own minds, that the property they covet is comparatively of ſmall value in the hands of the preſent poſſeſſor, and that great advantage would accrue from its being in their hands; and therefore "*the transfer ought to be made*," and they "do what *they* think *right*" in bringing this about. *Pol. Juſt.* vol. i. 99. 4to edit.

Such is the morality to be deduced from the book of nature, when left to man's own interpretation. The eighth and tenth Commandments of the Decalogue are ſurely more explicit: of the *expediency* of the latter I leave all men now to judge from the account juſt given of the grievous miſtakes we may be liable to, in framing for ourſelves a ſyſtem of duty and moral action independent of Revelation; and I return with confidence to the appeal I have made in my Diſcourſe, "to every "man's own feelings, to decide upon the neceſſity of "a divine Revelation, in addition to the light of nature, "with a view to his own happineſs and ſecurity, as "ariſing out of the confidence he would wiſh to repoſe "in his neighbours and aſſociates." "Will you dare "to aſſert," ſays M. Linguet, in his critical analyſis of Voltaire's works, "that it is in philoſophic families we "are to look for models of filial reſpect, conjugal love, "ſincerity in friendſhip, or fidelity among domeſ-"tics?" Linguet was an admirer of Voltaire, but diſapproved of his oppoſition to Chriſtianity. This is noticed in *Mr. Fuller's Goſpel its own Witneſs*; to which I muſt again refer for proofs of the immorality of modern Deiſm: they are too numerous to tranſcribe; and I cannot pretend to place them in a ſtronger light, than Mr. Fuller himſelf has done.

Page 466. *note* (3).

It cannot ſurely with any fairneſs be alleged after this, that Biſhop Taylor regarded Chriſtianity as "nothing "more than a rule of life."] I have only ſelected a few paſſages from Biſhop Taylor, to ſhew, that however he

he may have appeared to Mr. Fellowes, from ſome detached expreſſions, to have regarded Chriſtianity as "only a rule of life," he was certainly by no means unmindful of the doctrinal parts of Chriſtianity, and particularly of the atonement by the blood of Chriſt. The paſſages that might be adduced from Dr. Clarke, whom Mr. Fellowes alſo cites, are innumerable: and from Dr. Cave's works (as many of them, as I have by me to refer to) I could, if it was neceſſary, produce enough, in a ſhort ſpace of time, to ſatisfy any reaſonable mind. But I muſt confeſs, that Mr. Fellowes's opinion of Chriſtianity in this inſtance ſeems to me ſo little conſonant to the tenor of the New Teſtament, that had Biſhop Taylor, Dr. Clarke, and Dr. Cave, been unexceptionable witneſſes in his favour, it would have had no weight with me. If Chriſtianity is "nothing "more than a rule of life," then not only, as St. Paul ſaith, is "our preaching vain," but certainly Chriſt hath died in vain.

I am not acquainted with all Mr. Fellowes's works; and indeed I have not yet had any opportunity of reading the particular publication to which Dr. Parr alludes in his note: therefore I cannot pretend to judge of any opinions of Mr. Fellowes, but ſuch as are ſtated in the treatiſe I have particularly cited; "*Reli-*"*gion without Cant.*" It is in this publication I find the propoſition ſo ſtrongly inſiſted on, that "Chriſ-"tianity is no more than a rule of life." But this is alſo accompanied with many aſſertions that muſt be held to imply, that ſome very important tenets of the Church of England are not Goſpel truths. I muſt declare, though I am ſorry to do it, that not even the eloquence of Dr. Parr could perſuade me that it is very correct morality to continue in open and profeſſed communion with a Church, whoſe tenets we think it neceſſary to diſavow. This indeed is enough to fix upon the Church the charge which Socinians are ſo forward to advance, (but which I had hoped was not true), namely, that many members of the Church are not ſincere in their profeſſions, and would quit it, if they had a fair opportunity. Mr. Fellowes has reaſon indeed to be gratified with Dr. Parr's eulogium, becauſe it is the teſtimony of a neighbour; and be-

ſides its eloquence, it is ſuch a hiſtory of his character, as none but a neighbour could ſupply. May he long live to exerciſe the charity for which he is ſo warmly commended! Nor would I wiſh to reſtrain his pen; which has written much that I admire, and much that I could commend. But indeed he would do well to be more conſiſtent; for though he wiſhes Chriſtianity to be even preached and promulgated as "*no more than a rule of* "*life*," yet he does not ſcruple to ſpeak of "the mercy "of God," as "operating through the *atonement* of "Chriſt." Is ſuch a doctrine as this then to be ſuppreſſed, and the ranſom which Chriſt paid for our ſins to be never mentioned, becauſe it may chance to be objectionable to the Jew and Turk, Infidel and Heretic? John the Baptiſt did not take this method of turning men to repentance. When the Phariſees and Sadducees came to his baptiſm, he told them he had a *new* doctrine to deliver to them, not in any manner accommodated to their prejudices, but in direct oppoſition to them. When St. Paul had to do with the Stoics and Epicureans at Athens, he little heeded the ſcorn and deriſion with which they treated his new Gods, Jeſus and Anaſtaſis, (ſee *Cave's Life of Paul*,) but continued to preach "*Chriſt crucified, and the reſurrection of the* "*dead:*" nor did he fail of making converts; among whom was Dionyſius the learned Areopagite.—This mode of *ſuppreſſing* the great doctrines of Chriſtianity is, in my humble opinion, entirely incompatible with the engagements of a Miniſter of the Church of England. I am as much an enemy to the doctrine of Faith without works, as Mr. Fellowes can be: but I am very certain, that the doctrine of works without Faith is not the doctrine of the Church of England, nor yet indeed of the Church of Chriſt. "The form of ſound "words," originally delivered to the ſaints, was to be preached and promulgated whole and entire, and not "accommodated by a bold retrenchment of myſteries "to the blindneſs and the pride of human reaſon."

It is unpleaſant to me to dwell ſo long on this ſubject; but if ever there was a time, when the Church required to be protected from the intruſion of ſecret enemies, and the reproach of falſe friends, it is the preſent; when the Unitarian party and other Diſſenters are continually

inſinuating,

inſinuating, that there are many among us, whoſe Faith belies the language of their lips. Many ſuch charges occur in the writings of Dr. Prieſtley and Mr. Lindſey. Mr. Lindſey has certainly taken the only ſtep to be taken upon ſuch occaſions, to ſecede from a ſociety whoſe tenets and principles he did not approve. Mr. Lindſey however, who has himſelf had the conſiſtency to ſecede, has particularly *praiſed* and *commended* a mode of conduct in two of his friends, which appears to me to be without a ground of excuſe. The caſes I allude to are thoſe of Dr. Chambers of Achurch in Northamptonſhire, and Mr. Evanſon of Tewkeſbury. Theſe gentlemen, it ſeems, diſapproved of many of the profeſſed doctrines of the Church of England: but having preferment which they did not chooſe to relinquiſh without *compulſion*, they took upon them, in the performance of the public ſervice, (which they were bound by a voluntary engagement to adhere to,) to omit every part of the Liturgy which they did not approve; a conduct which appears to me diſhoneſt both in the ſight of God and man. Yet Mr. Lindſey calls it a "noble effort;" and commends it as an act of manly ſpirit, and courageous honeſty: which is the more remarkable, becauſe in his own caſe he had ſet an example, by ſeceſſion and reſignation of his preferment, of the only proper conduct to adopt on ſuch an occaſion: and in only a few pages further, where he takes occaſion to notice the ſeceſſion of Mr. Maty, he introduces a letter from that able ſcholar and well-intentioned man, in which the caſe is put in the ſtrongeſt light. "Finally, I can neither "ſubmit to acquieſce in ſilence, after having made "my objections known, *nor take upon me to alter the "ſervice of the Church, as long as I continue to profeſs "myſelf a miniſter of it.*"

But to return from this digreſſion. I cannot wiſh to drive any perſon ſo learned and ingenious, and of ſo good a moral character as Mr. Fellowes is repreſented to be, out of the Church, and more particularly from the ſervice of the Church, if I could keep him in it. As therefore he profeſſes to have *morality* ſo much at heart, I would beſeech him duly to conſider, how much the morality of a Chriſtian muſt be, and is generally acknowledged to be, connected with the *doctrinal* tenets of the Goſpel:

in proof of which that I may refer to authority the leaſt exceptionable poſſible, I ſhall chiefly have recourſe to Dr. Samuel Clarke, whom Mr. Fellowes, as I have obſerved in my Diſcourſe, cites for the very purpoſe of proving that Chriſtianity is "no more than a rule of "life." Now Dr. Clarke has particularly drawn out for us the following *ſcale* of moral perfections. "From "what has been ſaid, we may obſerve; that *moral vir-* "*tues*, and what the Scripture calls the *fruits of the* "*Spirit*, are *one* and *the ſame thing* under different deno- "minations: when conſidered in *themſelves*, in their "own *abſolute* and *intrinſic nature*, as being *diſpoſitions* "of mind eſſentially and unalterably *good*, they are "ſtyled VIRTUES: when conſidered with regard to "their *effects*, in the viſible *actions* and *practice* of *men*, "they are called MORALITY. When conſidered with "reſpect to the *root* and *ſpring*, the *fountain* or *princi-* "*ple* from which they flow; namely, a right *ſenſe* of "the *reaſon* and *truth* of things, and a juſt regard to "*God* the Judge of all; they are then ſtyled RELI- "GION. Laſtly, when conſidered with reſpect to the "*extraordinary* ſupports they receive from the revelation "of the *Goſpel* in particular, as being therein explained "with *clearer* and more *diſtinct* declarations, enforced "with ſtronger and more powerful motives, encouraged "and promoted with all the *helps* and *aſſiſtances* of the "*Spirit* of *God*; in *this* reſpect, they are called the "FRUITS of the SPIRIT." *Sermons*, vol. iii. Serm. IX. Surely from this we learn, that the morality of the Goſpel is not mere morality; but morality recommended by the promiſe of *extraordinary helps* and *aſſiſtances*; enforced with ſtronger and more powerful motives than any other ſyſtem of morality whatſoever. And what motive can be ſtronger than the knowledge and aſſurance of God's *hatred* of *ſin?* And how can this be made ſo conſpicuous and clear to us, as by a due reflection on the *death* of Chriſt? the very object of which, according to Dr. Clarke himſelf, was, to *diſcourage ſin*. "To puniſh ſinners," ſaith he, "and "deſtroy wickedneſsout of his kingdom, is indeed the "neceſſary office even of that Governor who is good- "neſs itſelf; and *therefore*, in order to *diſcourage ſin*, he "thought fit it ſhould be pardoned by no eaſier me-

"thod

" thod than by the *incarnation* and *death of his Son.*" Serm. IX. vol. ii. And again, (which will particularly, I think, ſerve to ſhew how much it was this learned Divine's opinion that the *doctrines* of Scripture ſhould be made the foundation of Chriſtian morality,) " The Goſpel," ſays he, " ſhews us, that God is a be- " ing of purer eyes than to behold iniquity: ſo far *hating* " wickedneſs, as that he *did not think fit to pardon ſin,* " *without ſo great a teſtimony againſt it as the death of his* " *Son*; and yet, at the ſame time, of ſuch eſſential mercy " and goodneſs, that he would rather *give his own Son a* " *ranſom for ſinners*, than not find a method of pardon- " ing them, *conſiſtent with the wiſdom of his infinite and* " *eternal government.* By giving us conſequently the ex- " ample of Chriſt in his life, and in his *ſufferings*; the " *aſſiſtances* of his *Spirit*; the aſſurance of a reward for " virtue, in a happy immortality; and a more expreſs " *declaration* of his *wrath from heaven, againſt all un-* " *righteouſneſs* and ungodlineſs of men: by *theſe means* " does the *Goſpel*, in the *moſt effectual manner*, ' teach ' us, that, *denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we* ' *ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent* ' *world.*' And to them, who are thus taught by it, " and to them ONLY, it is, ' *the grace of God which* ' *bringeth ſalvation.*" Serm. XII. vol. ii. *Thus*, according to Dr. Clarke, (Mr. Fellowes's own authority,) and thus *only*, is Chriſtianity to be conſidered as " *a* " *rule of life*:" not by ſuppreſſion of its ſingular and important doctrines of atonement for ſin, the corruption of man, the wrath of God againſt all evil doers, and the gracious aſſiſtances of the holy Spirit, but by the *particular aid* and *addition* of all theſe " *extraordinary* " *ſupports*;" which raiſes it far above all *other* ſyſtems of " morality;" all *other* " religions" of the world; all *other* " rules of life;" all *other* means of " ſalvation!"

Page 470. *note* (4).

But as theſe miſrepreſentations of Chriſtianity have been repeatedly noticed and admirably expoſed by various writers, I need not take up more of your time with them at preſent.] I confeſs my own mind is ſo ſatisfied with the unanſwerable arguments that have been adduced, by many eminent writers, in vindication of the Goſpel from

these misrepresentations of the *preceptive* parts, that I cannot wish to do more than barely to refer to such works as are easily to be consulted: and that we may have the satisfaction of knowing that the friends of Revelation keep pace in learning and in zeal with its opponents, I shall be happy in referring chiefly to living authors, who have particularly applied their thoughts to the subject. See Dr. Parr's very able and learned Discourses, his *Spital Sermon*, April 1800; and his *Fast Sermon* of 1803; *Mr. Hall's Fast Sermon* of the same year; and his Discourse on *Modern Infidelity*: see also the works of an author I have often had occasion to cite; Mr. Fuller; particularly *The Gospel its own Witness*, Part I. ch. iv: consult also *Bishop Watson's Apology for the Bible*; and *Professor Brown's Appendix* to 5th edition of *Leland's View of Deistical Writers*; a work which itself will supply enough upon the subject to satisfy any reasonable mind: see particularly his Letters in answer to Lord Shaftesbury, Letter V. and his VIIth Letter to Mr. Collins; Letter XIV. in answer to Mr. Chubb, and Letter XXI. to Mr. Hume. The two next I have to cite, I am sorry to say, are now no longer to be ranked among living authors, though they lived long enough to witness and deplore many of the follies of this age of Reason; and strenuous were they in their endeavours to stem the torrent of modern infidelity: but, alas!

"——Fugaces——
"Labuntur anni! nec PIETAS moram
"Rugis et instanti senectæ
"Afferet indomitæque morti!"

"In full age and hoary holiness," they are gone to rest! I speak of Dr. Beattie and Dr. Maclaine. They have both written admirably upon the misrepresentations alluded to in the Discourse, and should by all means be consulted; see *Beattie's Evidences of Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 105—120; and *Dr. Maclaine's* very ingenious *Letters to Mr. Soame Jenyns* on his *Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion*. There are some excellent remarks also in *Leng's Boyle's Lectures*, Sermon XXI.

I shall only add to this note, for the information of those who may not have paid much attention to the subject,

ſubject, a ſhort ſpecimen of the views that have been taken of *patriotiſm*, in this age of Reaſon: (one of the *virtues* which the Goſpel has been accuſed of not *expreſsly recommending*.) It has been well ſhewn, that *ancient* patriotiſm was by no means a principle which the Goſpel could generally countenance; ſee *Lactantius*, lib. vi. §. 6. I ſhall endeavour to ſhew, that *modern* patriotiſm would as little deſerve to be generally inculcated, as a principle of Chriſtianity, as the patriotiſm to which Lactantius alludes.

In endeavouring to eradicate every *prejudice* of *education* that may be thought to ſtand in the way of this exalted virtue of *modern* patriotiſm, Helvetius ranks among the moſt obnoxious of theſe prejudices, that of "*filial affection:*" he adduces a *high* authority to prove that it is no *natural* principle. He thinks it muſt be admitted by thoſe who allow the fifth Commandment of the Decalogue to proceed from God. "Si les hommes," ſays he, "étoient, comme on le dit, "portés l'un vers l'autre par une attraction forte et "mutuelle, le Légiſlateur céleſte leur eût-il commandé "de s'aimer leurs peres et meres?" [We thank him for this irreſiſtible proof of the neceſſity of a divine Revelation to ſupply the defects of the law of nature; but this by the bye.] It would have been well, if, after making this uſe of the WORD of GOD, he would have had the decency to treat the principle of filial affection as at leaſt a virtuous and good principle, being, by his own inſinuation at leaſt, expreſsly enjoined by God: but not ſo: he not only denies that God has laid the foundation for ſuch an affection by any inſtinctive propenſity or attachment; but he inſiſts upon it that he has given rather "une force répulſive," "dans "le déſir naturel de l'indépendence," which ſeparates the daughter from the mother in marriage, and induces the ſon, for the ſake of gain, or honour, or mere pleaſure, to quit, "*avec plaiſir, les foyers paternels.*" He is ſo careful then of the *public good*, and *public happineſs*, as to *recommend* ſome wholeſome *reſtraints* to be placed upon this *private charity of life:* "La trop grande "force de *ce lien*," he remarks, "ſeroit *funeſte* aux "états;" "la premiere paſſion du citoyen doit être "celle des loix et du bien *public*"— "l'amour filial

" doit être ſubordonné dans l'homme à l'amour patrio-
" tique." It is well that he has not left us to find out for ourſelves the *ſpecial* reaſon for moderating and reſtraining this *dangerous* principle. " Qu'on en légi-
" time l'*exces*, qu'on le déclare le premier des amours,
" un fils eſt dès-lors en *droit de piller ſon voiſin*, &c. &c.
" pour ſoulager le beſoin d'un pere, ou pour *augmen-*
" *ter ſon aiſance.*" This *right* to rob and ſteal, &c. &c. which M. Helvetius conceives muſt flow from any ſuper-indulgence of filial affections, is a right, it ſeems, which his favourite law of nature confers: for certainly no law of God or man authoriſes theft and robbery, " pour augmenter l'aiſance" of either father or mother: but, according to Helvetius, it really *is* a *law* of *nature*: for he ſays, it is only the phyſical wants of man which keep him in a ſtate of ſociety; that we aſſociate ſolely for the ſake of prey, " comme les animaux carnaſſiers,
" tels que les renards et les loups:" and, for fear we ſhould ſtill ſuſpect any thing amiable to be at the bottom of theſe ſocial and domeſtic ties, he aſſures us, that the ſociable principle argues nothing good, for, " les
" loups ſont ſociété, et ne ſont pas bons." In another place he obſerves, unleſs the love of one's country be made the *firſt* of moral duties, a man may be a good father, huſband, ſon; but he cannot be a good *citizen*.
" Que de *crimes*," he concludes, " *l'amour des parens*
" n'a-t-il pas fait commettre!"

If ſuch be modern patriotiſm, I am heartily glad that Deiſts have not an opportunity of charging Chriſtianity with any encouragement of it. Lord Shafteſbury however, I muſt ſay, when *he* accuſed the Goſpel of an omiſſion in regard to the virtue of patriotiſm, ſeems not to have had ſuch an ill opinion of filial affection either as Helvetius or Mr. Godwin; for *he* pronounces it to be abſolutely *wrong* to prefer an indifferent perſon to one's father. *Enquiry concerning Virtue*, b. i. Part II.

Much has been written to vindicate Chriſtianity from this charge of omiſſion of ſome *public* virtues of high importance: and from the above it may appear how neceſſary it has been, of late, to vindicate her from the charge of overlooking the private charities and virtues of ſocial life. For my own part, I am perſuaded that patriotiſm is, as far as it need to be, countenanced

tenanced by the Scriptures; but never at the expence of thoſe private affections, which are, under all circumſtances whatſoever, an honour to our nature; and which are moſt particularly calculated to form the baſis of the *trueſt* and *moſt unexceptionable patriotiſm*. I feel aſſured alſo, that the Scriptures not only regard parental affection as a natural principle, but that the rank they aſſign to it in the ſcale of natural principles is, if not the firſt, moſt clearly the ſecond. I conceive that *no other concluſion* can be drawn from *thoſe* paſſages in Scripture, in which it is ſtated, that "a man ſhall "*leave* his *father* and *mother*, and cleave unto his *wife*;" and that, "if a man come not to Chriſt, and hate not "his father, and mother, and wife, &c. he cannot be "his diſciple," but that the *parental* affection is only ſecond to the *conjugal*, as a *ſocial* principle; but that *even theſe*, the *higheſt* and *moſt binding* of all *earthly ties*, muſt be ſacrificed to the *love* of *God*, and his laws, if the caſe requires it. The term "hate," which St. Luke uſes, I conceive to be fully explained by the correſpondent paſſage of St. Matthew; "He that loveth father and "mother *more than me:*" which I am diſpoſed to regard not only as another ſtrong proof of the caſe in point, but as no trifling argument for the divinity of our bleſſed Saviour; ſo ſtrong are the expreſſions, and yet ſo perſonal, that if the love of God is intended, (and nothing leſs I think can be,) then Chriſt was God.

Page 471. *note* (5).

It is further explained by the precept, that we ſhould do unto others, as we would they ſhould do unto us; that is, under a ſuppoſed change of circumſtances, which is manifeſtly implied.] "Some men are ſo ſubtle and diſin-"genuous, that they will labour to puzzle and perplex "the moſt ſimple truths, and to put obſcure conſtruc-"tions upon the brighteſt maxims." With this reflection Mr. Pyle begins an excellent diſcourſe upon the very ſubject of this great Chriſtian precept; in which he ſhews the true nature, meaning, and *limits* of this grand duty: for limits it certainly has; ſince, to refer again to the ſame excellent writer, "we are to "require

" require of other men, and always to practiſe towards " them, *not* what a corrupt notion of our own intereſt, " nor what a wild fancy and imagination may prompt " us to wiſh were done; but what appears laudable " and honourable, equitable and reaſonable to be " done." The law therefore does not require, that a magiſtrate ſhould acquit a criminal, or a creditor a fraudulent debtor: but we are only bound by it (as another eminent Divine expreſſes himſelf) " to obſerve in all " caſes that behaviour to others, which on ſimilar oc- " caſions we could, with *juſtice* and *reaſon*, expect to " receive from them." See *Carr's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 228. See, on the union and coincidence of ſelf-love and benevolence, the references in Parr's Notes to his *Spital Sermon*, p. 34.

May I be allowed to conclude this part of my ſubject in the words of the ingenious Mr. Baker, at the cloſe of his valuable *Reflections upon Learning*. " And now having gone through the ſeveral ſorts of " learning, and obſerved the various *defects*, and oft- " times *uncertainties*, which they are ſubject to: the " concluſion is obvious; that ſince no ſatisfaction is to " be met with from them, we are to ſeek for it ſome- " where elſe, if happily it may be found. It may be " found, but not in our own powers, or by our own " ſtrength; and that which our moſt exalted *Reaſon*, " under all its improvements, cannot yield us, is only " to be had from REVELATION. It is there we may " ſecurely reſt, after the mind has tried all other ways " and methods of knowledge, and has tired itſelf with " fruitleſs enquiries. And were there no other uſe " of human learning, there is at leaſt this in it: that, by " its many defects, it brings the mind to a ſenſe of its " own weakneſs, and makes it more readily, and with " greater willingneſs, ſubmit to Revelation. God may " have ſo ordered in his wiſe Providence, thereby to " keep us in a conſtant dependence upon himſelf, and " under a neceſſity of conſulting him in his Word; " which ſince profane men treat ſo neglectfully al- " ready, they would have it in greater contempt, and " it would be much more vile in their eyes, did they " find any thing *within them*, equally perfect, which

" might

" might guide them in their courſe, and ' bring them ' to the haven where they would be.' But this ſince " they do not meet with, it ought to wean them from " an opinion of themſelves, and incline them to ſeek " out ſatisfaction ſomewhere elſe, and to TAKE SHEL- " TER WHERE IT MAY BE FOUND !"

SERMON

SERMON IX[a].

TITUS ii. 15.

Theſe things ſpeak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man deſpiſe thee.

IN theſe directions of the Apoſtle to Titus, we have a ſummary of ſome of the principal duties of the miniſterial office. Firſt, "ſpeak;" ταῦτα λάλει: ſecondly, "exhort;" καὶ παρακάλει: and thirdly, "Rebuke with "all authority;" καὶ ἔλεγχε μετὰ πάσης ἐπιταγῆς. And then follows, μηδείς σε περιφρονείτω, "let no man deſpiſe thee." The firſt would appear to refer to the mere enunciation of the Word; which in the primitive times was

[a] This Sermon, having been preached before the Univerſity, by appointment, on the Sunday immediately ſubſequent to the concluſion of the preceding Lecture, and the ſubject being accidentally ſuch as eaſily to connect with the view there taken of Modern Infidelity, is here added.

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aſſigned to the public *Readers* and *Deacons*. The ſecond extends to the *preaching* of the Word, with *exhortation, intreaty*, and *advice*; the office more particularly of the *Biſhops* and *Preſbyters*[b]. And the third to the exerciſe of eccleſiaſtical diſcipline and cenſures, which of courſe belonged to the ſuperiors of the Church. None of theſe things were to be intermitted; but eſpecially the latter, which was to give effect to the other two; and to which, in all likelihood, the words, "let no man deſpiſe thee," more immediately apply: that is, as I conceive, let none deſpiſe your authority, or aſſume to themſelves a licence to tranſgreſs, for want of having the laws of God properly enforced upon them, and ſecured in all reſpect due to them.

But there is another ſenſe given to the verb περιφρονέω[c], by which it is held to ſignify not merely a defiance or neglect, but ſuch a kind of contempt, as from one who *looks*

[b] See *Potter on Church Government*; and *Bingham's Origines Eccleſiaſticæ*.

[c] See *Eraſmus* on the paſſage; *Leigh's Critica Sacra*; and *Parkhurſt*.

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down upon another as his inferior in power, in ſtation, or in wiſdom. And perhaps it is to this latter ſort of contempt, more particularly, that the Clergy of our own days are expoſed; which amounts rather to a contempt of God's Word, than of his miniſter. For there are many diſpoſed to ſcoff at our preaching, and deſpiſe our exhortations, and defy our reproofs, through a ſelf-conceit of their own ſuperior talents, and unlimited freedom, which ſets them above all advice and aſſiſtance, all eccleſiaſtical interference, and even, as they think, the interpoſition of God himſelf.

There is no doubt but that we have much relaxed in the exerciſe of ſome of thoſe external powers, with which the Church firſt inveſted its miniſters. Eccleſiaſtical cenſures are now ſeldom heard of; and excommunication ſubſiſts rather as a *civil* than an eccleſiaſtical puniſhment; is ſeldom, if ever, denounced for moral pravity, or any acts of mere irreligion. Is this relaxation in diſcipline to be regarded as a mark of indifference, or of timidity, or of any ſenſe of weakneſs in the Clergy? By no means. It is to be attributed to the conduct and manners of the

the *other* members of the Church, which have rendered theſe acts of diſcipline of none effect. Excommunication, for inſtance, muſt needs have loſt its power of reforming, when, in conſequence of the prevailing manners of the world, the two paſſions, upon which it uſed to work, ſhame and fear, have loſt their effect. "*Note that man,*" ſaith the Apoſtle, "*and have no company with him,* "*that he may be aſhamed*[d];" and, through the wholeſome operation of that ſhame, reformed and brought to repentance: for this was the great object of that particular act of diſcipline, as well as to terrify others by the example[e]. But who is there that would now diſdain to aſſociate with the excommunicated? or what fear do the generality of men ſtand in, either of temporal or eccleſiaſtical diſgrace, for their evil doings? The Sacraments alſo are ſo lamentably neglected, that to be excluded from them is no diſhonour, as in times paſt; and it would ſeem to

[d] 2 Theſſ. iii. 14.

[e] See *Beza, Grotius,* and *Doddridge* on the paſſage; and *Leigh's Critica Sacra,* voce Ἐντρέπομαι. See alſo *Bingham's Orig. Eccleſ.* b. xvi. ch. ii. §. 12.

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be a greater inconvenience to many to be driven *to* the altar of God, than *from* it. It would be making a mockery of God's holy inſtitutions to expoſe them to ſuch ſlight and ſcorn.

But the age has claimed to be regarded as an enlightened age; and if ſo, the Clergy might well expect to have *more* rather than *leſs* influence, and to be able to relax in matters of external diſcipline, through a hope of having more internal authority. They might reaſonably expect to be able to lay aſide compulſion in enforcing the laws of God, when good ſenſe and reaſon were to be aſſiſtants in the cauſe. For the laws of God are ſtill *pretended* to be the object of all men's reſearches, though too many diſdain to look for them where alone they are to be found. But, as Solomon ſays, "*Seeſt "thou a man wiſe in his own conceit? there "is more hope of a fool than of him*[f]!" It is not the Clergy who are deſpiſed in theſe days, as I obſerved before; it is Revelation itſelf that is ſet at nought, and the laws, and ordinances, and doctrines of the Goſpel, that

[f] Proverbs xxvi. 12.

are ſlighted and contemned. But, as it has been admirably ſaid of ridicule, that it can never be the teſt of truth, becauſe truth muſt in the end be the teſt of ridicule[g], the ſame may be ſaid of contempt. Contempt can never prove either things or perſons to be contemptible; theſe muſt be proved to be contemptible, to ſanction the contempt.

Certainly, it muſt be granted, many laws may be contemptible, and a vain aſſumption of authority is always ſo: but the laws we have to adminiſter we conceive to be the expreſs laws of God; and that they were revealed from above, together with many other circumſtances intimately connected not only with our well being in this life, but with our ſalvation and redemption from ſin and miſery in the life to come. We conceive, that by a regular ſucceſſion from thoſe who were firſt appointed to promulgate this Revelation, it is our *peculiar* office to teach our brethren, to inſtruct them in the truth, to admoniſh them of the conſequences of their actions, to point out the way of ſalvation, and of happineſs here and hereafter;

[g] Preface to *Letters on Infidelity*. Oxford, 1784.

and

and even to open to them the gates of heaven. The moſt fatal contempt then that we are expoſed to is a denial of all this; either an open refuſal on the part of others to be inſtructed, or a manifeſt diſtruſt of our miſſion and appointment. Some ſay we never were ſent; and many, that they need no teaching. Thoſe who think we never were ſent deny the fact of Revelation: thoſe who ſay they need no teaching deny the utility of it. The fact of Revelation it is their buſineſs to diſprove who deny it: the utility of Revelation may, I think, be made apparent, from the very conduct of thoſe who ſo peremptorily deny it. To prove it from the Scriptures is to little purpoſe in ſuch a caſe: even the ways of God and the thoughts of God muſt, it ſeems, be ſubmitted to the teſt of *Reaſon*. In proving the utility of Revelation in the way I propoſe, I ſhall hope to prove alſo the utility of that authority we preſume to be delegated to us; and to ſhew how conſiſtent with right Reaſon it is to expect, that there ſhould be ſuch a conſtitution of things.

Now it is exceedingly obvious, and always has been ſo, if the generality of the world

would but have attended to it, that thoſe who put themſelves moſt forward to expoſe the Prieſthood, who moſt notoriouſly renounce their authority, and deſpiſe their interference, are never ſo much bent upon eſtabliſhing their great point of man's *independency*, as when they are employed in withdrawing thoſe from their dependence on the Church, who ſhould be taught by the Prieſthood; for no other reaſon, but that *they* may have leave to inſtruct them themſelves, and to rule and direct their conſciences as they pleaſe. It is a ſnare and a deluſion, therefore, to pretend that ſubmiſſion to the Prieſthood is ſlavery; that every man is ſelf-taught, who will attend to the dictates of his own judgment, and the emotions of his own heart; and that every man is at liberty to ſerve God in the way that ſeemeth beſt in his own eyes, when theſe teachers themſelves aſſume the direction [h].

I have already obſerved, that any vain aſ-

[h] Mr. Paine has aſſured the world, that "every man's mind "is his own Church." The ſectariſts between the reigns of Charles I. and Charles II. inculcated the ſame maxim; and it is much inſiſted on in a pamphlet, that made ſome noiſe in its time, entitled, *The Sufficiency of the Spirit's Teaching*, by a man of the name of *How*.

ſumption

ſumption of authority is juſtly contemptible; and nothing certainly could be more ſo, than to pretend to be the miniſters of *God's* word and will, without his eſpecial appointment and conſent. But do not they aſſume this very authority in the moſt unwarrantable manner, who preſume to tell the world, not only that God never *has* revealed himſelf to man, otherwiſe than in the viſible creation; but that he never *could do ſo*[1]? Do not thoſe

[1] It is very well obſerved by a ſenſible French writer, that among Deiſts and Infidels, "le grand mot de *religion naturelle* "n'eſt qu'un leurre dont ils ſe ſervent pour nous détacher plus "aiſément du Chriſtianiſme:" and he then notices the multiplicity of diſcordant opinions, out of which we muſt be content to take our choice, if once we reject Chriſtianity. They are indeed innumerable. The few that are mentioned by the author alluded to are ſtill too many to introduce into a note; but Mr. Soame Jenyns has given us a ſhorter ſummary of the wanderings of human Reaſon, which was not only not extravagant when he wrote it, but may ſerve for a faithful picture of the exact ſtate of the caſe at preſent. "Reaſon," ſays he, "when left to the guidance of her own wild imaginations, has "perſuaded ſome, that there is no God; others, that there can "be no future ſtate: ſhe has taught ſome, that there is no dif-"ference between virtue and vice; and that to cut a man's "throat, and to relieve his neceſſities, are actions equally meri-"torious. She has convinced many, that they have no free-"will in oppoſition to their own experience; ſome, that there "can be no ſuch thing as ſoul, or ſpirit, contrary to their own

assume *this* authority, who, without the *smallest pretension* to a divine mission, venture to assure the whole world, that any external revelation of God's will and designs is unnecessary? who venture to tell their fellow creatures, not only how they are to be saved, but how they *must* be saved? who venture to secure them against all future punishment of sin, all fear of hell, or a judgment to come; without being in any manner able to answer for the evil consequences of an error in judgment? "When Noah "followed the direction of God in building "the ark for the saving of his house, the "world was against him. To them no ark

"perceptions; and others, no such thing as matter, or body, "in contradiction to their senses: by analysing all things she "can shew, that there is nothing in any thing; by perpetual "sifting she can reduce all existence to the invisible dust of "scepticism; and by recurring to first principles prove, to the "satisfaction of her followers, that there are no principles at "all." I think I might almost venture at once to appeal to the foregoing Lectures, in proof of every thing here asserted; in proof that the wanderings of human Reason are always equally strange, and that the great advancement of knowledge, which many are so proud to boast, has not served to bring Deists and Infidels into *agreement* upon any of the most essential points either of religion or morality.

"was

" was neceſſary, becauſe they had in their " ſupreme wiſdom previouſly determined a- " mong themſelves, that there would be no " flood [k]." The caſes ſurely are parallel.

It is common, and always has been ſo, but perhaps never more than of late years, for the greateſt Infidels to pretend to know the whole will of Heaven, far better than thoſe who have the teſtimony of hiſtory, and prophecy, and miracles, and therefore of the ſpirit of God himſelf, to ſupport their commiſſion. Nor is this to be much wondered at. By denying the *poſſibility* of an external and ſupernatural revelation, they eaſily fall into the folly, which Lactantius has ſo ably expoſed [l], of people who pretend to know every thing concerning ſome diſtant city, the name only of which had reached their ears. They may, ſays he, deſcribe every thing upon conjecture as they pleaſe, though liable to be confuted by the firſt traveller who ſhould viſit the place: " Atqui hoc " idem faciunt philoſophi," ſays he, " qui " diſputant quid in *cœlo* agatur:" and he adds, " Quod *ſi exiſtimarent deſcenſurum*

[k] *Eſſay on the Church.* [l] *Inſtitut.* lib. iii. c. 3.

" *eſſe aliquem* qui eos delirare, ac mentiri " doceret, nunquam quicquam de *iis rebus* " quas *ſcire non poſſunt*, diſputarent." And thus abſurdly, without doubt, do all thoſe act, who pretend to aſſert, that they can diſcover all the ways of heaven by the light of their own reaſon; and preſume, that as they have never themſelves had any intercourſe with thoſe who have been in heaven, they need never believe, that any can, at any time, have come from thence to inſtruct mankind. But it might be affirmed, that the very nature of man, as well as the hiſtory of man, and even the viſible condition of things, all conſpire to prove the extreme probability of ſuch a Revelation, if right Reaſon may really be ſuffered to decide.

For if this globe of earth, which we inhabit, has a connection with the reſt of the univerſe, and man is immortal, or even capable of immortality, it is not *reaſonable* to confine his views, or even his knowledge, entirely to the ſpot he at preſent inhabits[m].

[m] See Seneca's Preface to his *Natural Queſtions*. " O quam " contempta res eſt homo, niſi *ſupra humana* ſe erexerit!"— " *Surſum* ingentia ſpatia ſunt, in quorum *poſſeſſionem* animus " admittitur."—" Cum illa tetigit, alitur, creſcit: ac velut " vinculis

We ſee, it is true, no beings *now* deſcending from heaven to inſtruct us; we ſee none aſcending thither to give us aſſurance of our own aſcent: but we nevertheleſs expect, that our being will be extended beyond the grave; and that when we appear to have totally done with this earth, we may ſtill not have done with the *univerſe*. We may reaſonably regard ourſelves, therefore, as inhabitants of the univerſe, and fitted already to hold ſome ſort of converſe and communication with the beings above us. Though we have therefore no ſenſible communication at preſent with any other parts of the *univerſe*, beyond this terraqueous globe, yet that we have all an intereſt beyond the confines of this earth, if ſome doubt, almoſt all believe, and none can poſitively deny.

That God ſhould have communicated with *man* then, in ſome ſtage of his exiſtence, is moſt *conſonant* to *Reaſon*, if it is moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe man is to live again: and this I believe will be pretty generally grant-

" vinculis liberatus, in originem redit.—Et hoc habet argu-
" mentum divinitatis ſuæ; quod illum divina delectant: nec ut
" *alienis* intereſt, ſed ut *ſuis*."

ed,

ed, from the almoſt univerſal conſent of men, learned and ignorant, Jew and Greek, Pagan and Chriſtian. For though indeed ſuch wiſe and eminent men as Epictetus, Seneca, Cicero, Cæſar, Pliny, Catullus, Perſius, Horace[n], and more that I could mention, ſeem upon ſome occaſions to have doubted of it; yet they certainly did not entirely diſbelieve it, and have ſometimes argued otherwiſe[o]: and that they doubted at all, if it proves any thing, can only ſerve to ſhew, that if we *are* to live again; if this great and conſoling doctrine *is* true; we require to be aſſured of it otherwiſe than by argument, or the mere conjectures of philoſophy[p]. It is not from

[n] See *Epictetus apud Arrian.* lib. iii. c. 13. *Seneca's Conſolatio ad Marciam*, c. 19. *Cicero pro Cluentio*, lxi. *Tuſcul. Diſput.* lib. i. 11. epiſt. iii. 4. lib. vi. epiſt. xxi. lib. vi. *Cæſar apud Salluſtium in Bello Catilinario. Pliny, Nat. Hiſt.* lib. ii. c. 7. lib. vii. c. 55. *Catullus ad Leſbiam*, 5. *Perſius*, Sat. v. 152. *Hor.* lib. i. Od. xxiv. 5. Od. xxviii. 15. lib. iv. Od. vii. Epiſt. lib. i. Ep. xvi. 79.

[o] This is particularly the caſe, as is well known, with Cicero and Seneca.

[p] Mr. Hume calls the queſtion concerning Providence and a future ſtate, "the moſt ſpeculative queſtion of all philoſophy." *Eſſays*, vol. ii. §. 11. Is not this as much as to admit the uncertainty of ſuch enquiries, where Reaſon only is our guide; and to prove the unſpeakable bleſſing and benefit of a divine Revelation?

beings

beings like ourſelves that we can learn it; only from *God;* for "HE it was who made "us *all,* and not we ourſelves."

As for the inſtrumentality of man in carrying on a ſyſtem of revealed religion, originating from God himſelf, I ſhall hope to be able to ſhew, that this alſo is quite conſonant to Reaſon, and deducible from the common courſe of things. For if men are not to be governed thus, by a divine Revelation in the firſt inſtance, and human inſtruction in the ſecond, we muſt ſubmit to be governed, as I have partly ſhewn already, by *human* inſtruction and human *authority,* in the firſt, and laſt, and every inſtance. This perhaps may ſeem ſtrange to ſome; but indeed natural Religion has *her* prieſts and *her* prophets, and, I may add, *ſtands in need* of both.

Many of the laws inſtituted by man are ſtrictly moral laws, and univerſally allowed to be neceſſary to reſtrain men's paſſions; ſo much ſo, that among the many ſtrange ſyſtems of Deiſts, it has been inſiſted on by more than one celebrated writer[q], that the

[q] Mr. Hobbes has inſiſted upon the laws of the ſtate being the only ſtandard of morality, in the *fulleſt* manner: but other writers

civil law is the ſole foundation of right and wrong, and that even religion has no obligation, but as enjoined by the magiſtrate. Not however to inſiſt upon ſuch an abſurdity, the moral and reſtraining laws alluded to may certainly be regarded as an additional inſtruction on the part of wiſe legiſlators, engrafted on the law of nature, and to a certain degree explanatory of it[r]. And

writers have intimated as much, particularly Lord Bolingbroke, who allows *of no other* ſanctions or penalties, than the laws of the land, to enforce the *law* of *nature*. See his *Works*, vol. v. p. 90.

[r] See *Puffendorf De Officio Hominis et Civis*; and *Buddæus's Hiſtoria Juris Naturalis*, prefixed to the London edition of 1758, §§. 3, 4, &c.

Helvetius in the 3d ch. of the 7th ſect. of his Treatiſe *De l'Homme*, has the following note. "Tout crime non puni "par la loi eſt un crime journellement commis. Quelle plus "forte preuve de l'inutilité des religions?" In anſwer to which, we might ſurely inſiſt, that no better proof could be adduced of the abſolute need of Revelation. The morals of a nation, Helvetius pretends, depend ſolely on the magiſtrate and the eſtabliſhed civil laws. And yet he ſays elſewhere, that Reaſon without Revelation is able to inſtruct man in every moral duty. Now if the latter is the caſe, why *any* laws to enforce the practice of morality? Or if *ſome* laws are neceſſary, as Helvetius admits, and thoſe crimes are common which the civil law does not reach, what can reſtrain men from *ſuch crimes*, but a revealed law? to enforce at leaſt all ſuch dictates of Reaſon, and duties of the law natural, which the law of the ſtate

may we not aſk here, if the viſible works of God are ſo inefficacious in regard to this great object of the right government of men's paſſions, that weak and fallible men are obliged to give them *their* ſupport, ſhall not God himſelf rather have added expreſs laws to this effect? The contrary would be to make men both wiſer and better than God, in providing for the order of the world.

In regard alſo to *other* knowledge deducible from a view of nature, how ſhould we ever know all that is to be known of God's *power, ſkill,* and *infinite wiſdom,* as diſplayed

ſtate had not meddled with? In both caſes, it is evident, according to Helvetius himſelf, that extraordinary ſanctions and additional motives are wanting. M. Helvetius indeed has a curious way of getting rid of this concluſion in another place. "On veut," ſays he, "que la morale ſoit l'œuvre de Dieu: "mais elle fait en tout pays partie de la légiſlation des peuples. "Or la légiſlation eſt des hommes. Si Dieu eſt réputé l'auteur "de la morale, c'eſt qu'il l'eſt de la raiſon humaine, et que la "morale eſt l'œuvre de cette raiſon." But human laws are clearly intended to govern thoſe who will not be governed by the law natural; therefore the law natural is not ſufficient, without a further interference on the part of God; though, M. Helvetius *pretends,* only through the medium of the human Reaſon: but why not by revealed laws, and human miniſtry and apoſtleſhip?

in

in the ſtructure of the world, but from *naturaliſts, aſtronomers, anatomiſts, chemiſts,* and other *experimental philoſophers,* wiſer than the generality of mankind, and indeed alone capable of inveſtigating ſuch curious matters? *Natural* religion therefore muſt not only be *taught,* but in many inſtances even its moſt important laws enforced by additional ordinances, and additional ſanctions. The queſtion then does not lie ſo much between revealed and natural religion as is generally thought, and ſo often pretended, as between a divine and human *expoſition* of the *laws* of *nature,* and the *will* and *attributes* of *our Creator:* and it is indeed no ſmall inconſiſtency into which Deiſts and Freethinkers fall, that while they pretend againſt Revelation, that every one is competent to judge for himſelf, and ſhould be left at liberty to do ſo excluſively, yet *they* perſiſt in thinking for the reſt of the world, and judging for them moſt deciſively; having all the while no *aſſurance* to give them of future rewards or puniſhments, in caſe they ſhould be right; and what is more, of any indemnity for rejecting Chriſtianity, ſuppoſing *it* to be true.

I ſhall

I ſhall now hope to have ſhewn, upon the mere footing of Reaſon, that the Chriſtian Prieſthood is not to be ſlighted, nor their authority ſuſpected, becauſe they claim to be a body ſet apart for the inſtruction and regulation of their fellow creatures; for ſuch a body is neceſſary for the propagation and ſupport even of natural religion [*]: that their

[*] Mr. Hamilton Reid, in his account of Infidel Societies, publiſhed in 1800, gives an account of the proceedings in the metropolis, which I ſhould have concluded to be true, from its being ſo conſonant to the common courſe of things, even if we had had no poſitive voucher for it. "Next to ſongs in which "the Clergy were a ſtanding ſubject of abuſe, the tables of the "club-rooms were frequently ſtrewed with penny, two-penny, "and three-penny publications, as it were ſo many ſwivels "againſt eſtabliſhed opinions; while, to enable the members "to furniſh themſelves with the heavy artillery of Voltaire, "Godwin, &c. reading-clubs were formed: but ſtill, it ſo hap-"pened, that thoſe who deſpiſed the labour of reading, took "their creeds implicitly from the extemporaneous effuſions of "others, whoſe talents were comparatively above their own. "And yet, theſe people were invariably in the habit of ridi-"culing Chriſtians, in concert with the orators, for being "blindly led by Prieſts." See alſo on the ſame ſubject an excellent publication on the conſequences of ſchiſm, entitled "*Unity the Bond of Peace*;" publiſhed anonymouſly 1802. It is remarkable, that many of the cheap works diſſeminated among the people to withdraw them from the Church, have both the form and name of *Creeds* and *Catechiſms*; perhaps in deriſion, but ſtill with a tacit acknowledgment, that Creeds and Catechiſms

pretenſion to a *divine* miſſion is not in Reaſon to be deſpiſed or ſlighted as ſuch, becauſe, as beings connected with the univerſe as well as with this ſmall planet, an intercourſe with ſuperior beings is exceedingly probable, and muſt be poſſible. It appears alſo that their claim to be the accredited miniſters of ſuch a Revelation is not in reaſon to be ſlighted or deſpiſed, becauſe without a perpetual miracle human inſtruments muſt be employed; and becauſe the Chriſtian Prieſthood derive their authority through an uninterrupted ſucceſſion, from thoſe who have teſtified, and ſealed their teſtimony with their blood; thus atteſting that they had poſitive and indiſputable proof of God's preſence and power, and eſpecial conſent, in the peculiar circumſtances of their own miſſion and appointment.

There is certainly therefore nothing unreaſonable, nothing to which a true philoſopher can find cauſe to object, in the conſtitution of the Chriſtian Church: and after what has been ſaid, I cannot pretend to give a more

Catechiſms are uſeful, where the people are to be inſtructed, and any important principles of belief or practice impreſſed upon their minds.

juſt

juſt deſcription of it, than in the words of a moſt celebrated and zealous defender of it. "In this," ſaith he, "the Church differs "from all other ſocieties; becauſe *they* be- "long to *this* world, and *their* rights and "privileges are confined to it: whereas the "Church extends to both worlds, the viſible "and the inviſible, and is partly on earth, "and partly in heaven. In its earthly "members it is viſible; in its rulers it "is viſible; in its worſhip it is viſible; in "its ſacraments it is viſible: but being alſo "a ſpiritual ſociety, it hath a *life* which is "*hidden;* and in the inward and ſpiritual "grace of all its outward ordinances it is "inviſible. As a kingdom, in which God "is Judge, and Chriſt is a Mediator, and an- "gels and ſaints departed are members; it "takes in the heaven itſelf, and is the *hea- "venly Jeruſalem,* which is *the Mother of "us all;* inſomuch that when we are ad- "mitted into it, our *converſation is in hea- "ven,* and the angels of heaven are our fel- "low ſervants; all making one great family "under Jeſus Chriſt, in whom all things are "gathered together in one, both which are "in heaven, and which are on earth. On

" which conſideration, what is rightly done " in the Church on earth, ſtands good in " heaven, as if it had been done there; and " the apoſtles of Chriſt received from him " *the keys of the kingdom of heaven,* with a " power of *binding* and *looſing,* which ex- " tends to heaven itſelf: and when Chriſ- " tians go to heaven, they are not carried " into a new ſociety, for they are already, " by the grace of God, tranſlated into it by " baptiſm [t]."

Such is the Chriſtian Church, and ſuch the character of the Chriſtian miniſtry. It is melancholy to think how many ſuppoſe, that by *ſlighting* our authority they in fact *leſſen,* if not wholly *deſtroy* it; as if it was in the power of man to abrogate an ordinance of God! Authority we claim none, but ſuch as we maintain to have been delegated to us by God for the good of others. We are to render " an account [u]," it is moſt true; and ſo far it is a charge of the greateſt perſonal importance to ourſelves: but the account we have to render will *relate to the condition of thoſe,* who *are* amenable, or *ſhould be ſo,* to our adminiſtration. We

[t] *Eſſay on the Church,* ch. ii.

[u] Hebrews xiii. 17.

know,

know, for the Lord hath ſpoken it by the mouth of his Prophet[x], that if we "ſpeak "not to warn the wicked from his wicked "way, to ſave his life," though "he die in "his iniquity, his blood will be required at "*our* hands:" but by the ſame authority we are aſſured, that if we do "warn the "wicked, and he turn not from his wicked-"neſs, nor from his wicked way, *he* ſhall "die in *his* iniquity; but we ſhall have de-"livered our ſouls." Neither will the account we have to render relate only to thoſe who willingly ſubmit themſelves to our authority, and continue ſtedfaſt in the unity of the Church; but it muſt in the nature of things extend to thoſe alſo, who ſhall have gone out from us, and to thoſe who ſhall have neglected the heavenly call; the *Schiſmatic*, whom we could not *reclaim*, and the *Infidel*, whom we have not been able to *convert*. We are not the miniſters of Chriſt in any low ſenſe of the word; we are the "paſtors" of "his flock[y];" his "miniſters "of reconciliation[z];" the "ſtewards of his "myſteries[a];" the "ambaſſadors of his

[x] Ezekiel iii. 18, 19. [y] Epheſ. iv. 11. 1 Peter v. 2.
[z] 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. [a] 1 Cor. iv. 1.

"grace[b]." Thoſe who deſpiſe the Chriſtian prieſthood, therefore, and oppoſe their authority, reject all the graces and benefits, of which they are appointed the diſpenſers.

But the contempt cannot but be much aggravated by men's perſiſting to ſeek and to accept all theſe diſpenſations at the hands of others; for pardon and grace are not of ſuch ſmall concern in the eyes of fallen man, as that he may be under any circumſtances wholly indifferent about them. Thoſe who will not have even God himſelf to "*bind*" them, will ſuffer *any man* to *ſet them free*. And therefore it is, that every hereſy, and even every ſyſtem of infidelity, has its own means of grace, and meaſures of ſecurity, which God never ſanctioned, and which right Reaſon can never approve. Hence not only all the extravagances, which ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm have engendered and ſtill encourage, but the inadequate and unholy expedients of Deiſm and Infidelity. If ſuperſtition has in ſome inſtances impoſed burthens, which God never required at our hands, Deiſts and Infidels have continually

[b] 2 Cor. v. 20.

aſſumed

aſſumed a power of *abſolving all men from the weight and puniſhment of their ſins*, without the ſmalleſt pretence to a divine commiſſion, and yet with the moſt confident aſſurances, that whatever *they ſo* "*looſe* on "earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven." Thus men are taught to believe, that they ſhall be ſaved, either by morality without devotion, or by election without morality: by ſincerity without faith, or faith without ſincerity: by immediate inſpiration without teaching, or by reaſon and nature in diſregard of both: by God's mercy alone, without redemption or atonement; or finally by annihilation and deſtruction, which are to cancel all delinquencies, and preclude all judgment [c].

This is but a very brief ſummary of the many different expedients invented by man for his own ſecurity, in contempt or in abuſe of God's holy word, and the means of grace which he himſelf has appointed. It is a de-

[c] "Non ignoro pleroſque conſcientia meritorum, nihil ſe "eſſe per mortem magis optare quam credere; malunt enim "extingui penitus, quam ad ſupplicia reparari." *Minutius Felix.*

plorable inconſiſtency that ſome men fall into, that while they affect to deſpiſe not only the reproofs, but the *abſolutions* of the Chriſtian miniſtry, they are ready enough to adopt the ſeveral expedients ſuggeſted by the reaſon of man; though their great variety alone might, one would think, be ſufficient to occaſion a juſt ſuſpicion and diſtruſt of their power and efficacy.

But to conclude. If ever there was a period wherein the Chriſtian miniſtry might glory in the purity and perfection of the laws they have to enforce and to adminiſter; in the ſublimity of the doctrines they have to publiſh and proclaim; in the conſolations they have to offer; the hopes they have to propoſe; the proſpects they have to unfold; the ſound advice, the ſure aſſiſtance, the ready help, the heavenly encouragement they have to ſupply: if ever the Church might be ſet open with a reaſonable hope, that every prudent and wiſe man would obey the heavenly call, and eagerly enter into the ſanctuary of Chriſt's mercy; ſurely it muſt be in an age like the preſent; wherein ſo much has been done, and is doing, in various

ous parts of the world, to perplex and confound[d], if not entirely to deſtroy, the very firſt and moſt elementary principles of religion and morality: when, in regard to *futurity*, ſome would confidently aſſure us, that death is a perpetual ſleep[e]: when others have been known to boaſt of their diſbelief, not only of Revelation, but of the very exiſtence of God himſelf[f]: when many, after decrying Chriſtianity as a ſyſtem of the baſeſt ſuperſtition, have bowed down again to ſtocks and ſtones, trees of liberty, and goddeſſes of Reaſon[g]! when others would degrade us from the rank of free agents, to ſubject us to a fatality as blind and irreſiſti-

[d] What perplexity and confuſion the *German Noveliſts* have endeavoured to introduce into modern Ethics, may be judged of from the titles of their works, as the ingenious Mrs. Weſt has well obſerved: "The Pitiable Adultereſs;"—"The Noble "Lie;"—"Generous Revenge;"—"The Honeſt Thieves;"—"The Guiltleſs Parricide;"—"Errors of Virtue;"—"Amia-"ble Indiſcretions;"—"The Innocent Slanderer;"—and "De-"licate Anger." *Letters to her Son*, vol. iii. p. 155.

[e] When the religion of REASON was proclaimed in France, it was decreed, and engraved on their tombs, that "*Death is an* "*eternal ſleep.*"

[f] See *M. Dupont's Speech*; which, with a few exceptions, was applauded by the whole National Convention of France.

[g] See Note (15). Sermon I.

ble as the aſcent of light, or the deſcent of heavy bodies[h]: when ſome would rob the ſoul of its immaterial eſſence, and render it as naturally corruptible as the mouldering urn, as tranſitory as the morning cloud[i]: when ſome, in their luſt for liberty, would give an unlimited freedom to the worſt paſſions of human nature, and abſolve men from ties and connections, which were deſigned to be the chief bonds of ſociety, the joy of every heart, and the ſource of every comfort[k]: when ſuicide, adultery, concubinage, and even, in one inſtance, infanticide, have not only been approved, but, I may ſay, even inculcated and recommended[l]. Surely we may well ſay, with the

[h] See Sermon IV. and the Notes. [i] *Ibid.*

[k] See Note from *Helvetius*, Sermon VIII. Note (4). and *Parr's Spital Sermon.*

[l] See *Godwin's Works*; *Hall's Sermon on Modern Infidelity*, pp. 46. 52; *Fuller on Deiſm*, Part I. ch. iii. vii.

I find in a publication before me the following ſhort abſtract of Mr. Godwin's moral and political principles, as they are to be collected from his *original* work on Political Juſtice, &c. Original I call it, not as the product of his own genius; for perhaps there is not one poſition in it that was not borrowed from French Infidels and French Revolutioniſts; but to diſtinguiſh it from ſubſequent editions, which I may not have ſeen, but in which I believe Mr. Godwin found occaſion to retract

Apoſtle, " This is not the wiſdom that de-

tract much of what he had originally inſiſted on, as indiſputable truths. Mr. Godwin then, in his Political Juſtice as well as in his other works, certainly endeavours to eſtabliſh theſe poſitions; " that to love our parents, our children, or our coun-" try, is contemptible ſuperſtition; that to make or to obſerve " promiſes or oaths, is immoral; that gratitude is a vice; " marriage an odious monopoly; remorſe a prejudice; and " crimes *miſtakes:* that the murderer is no more an object of " indignation or puniſhment than the dagger with which he " kills; that all property is uſurpation, all government ty-" ranny, all laws oppreſſion, and all religion impoſture." This is, to my certain knowledge, a juſt account of the doctrines Mr. Godwin has thought fit to inculcate and maintain in his writings. But there is ſtill one particular poſition not immediately noticed in the above abſtract, which, as it may interfere with what I conceive to be a great Chriſtian duty, I ſhall offer ſome remarks upon, and with that conclude. St. Peter expects us to " ſubmit ourſelves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's " ſake; whether it be to the king, as ſupreme, or unto go-" vernors, as unto them that are ſent by him, for the *puniſh-" ment* of *evil-doers*, and for the *praiſe* of them that do *well*." Εἰς ἐκδίκησιν κακοποιῶν, ἔπαινον δὲ ἀγαθοποιῶν. *He* enjoins to " honour all men; to love the brotherhood; to fear GOD; " and to honour the king." But Mr. Godwin, in his tender concern for morality, truth, and juſtice, aſſures us, that he thinks them in the utmoſt danger in *monarchies* of all ſorts. The outward appendages of royalty, in giving diſtinction to the individual, are, *he* ſays, a violation of truth and juſtice, and an offence to virtue, as rendering them of conſequence in the eyes of the multitude. But the caſe is greatly miſtaken, or much miſrepreſented. If theſe things were deſigned to expreſs the worth of the *man*, inſtead of the ſtate and dignity of the prince;

" ſcends from above; but is earthly, ſenſual,

prince; or to ſet one man above another, merely as man; then both truth and juſtice might occaſionally be violated; and virtue equally offended, if ſuch paraphernalia were *oppoſed* to the amiable qualities of a good heart. That ſuch a miſtake as Mr. Godwin himſelf makes, is not likely however to be general, we might conclude from his own remarks; " Is it *poſſible*," he aſks, " that an individual, who by ſevere labour earns a ſcanty " ſubſiſtence, if by accident or curioſity he becomes a ſpectator " of a royal progreſs, ſhould not mentally apoſtrophize this ele- " vated mortal, and aſk, what has made thee to differ from " me? If no ſuch ſentiment paſs through his mind," Mr. Godwin adds, " it is a proof that the corrupt inſtitutions of ſociety " have already diveſted him of all ſenſe of juſtice." That ſuch a ſentiment paſſes through the mind of many a man who has not learnt to govern himſelf by the Chriſtian precept, of honouring thoſe who are in authority over us, I have no doubt: but juſtice, I will venture to ſay, is *moſt* violated by not " ren- " dering to every man his due, cuſtom to whom cuſtom, ho- " nour to whom honour."

In regarding a king as a *different man from ourſelves*, it may be either as a king or a man. If we mean to take account of his moral character, or religious principles, or of the faſhion of his body, then every thing appertaining to royalty can only be conſidered as adventitious; he is then ſimply a man; and truth and juſtice would be violated, if we were to regard him as a god or an angel; if we were to account him *good*, merely becauſe he was *great*, or *wiſe*, merely in that his trappings were *ſplendid*. But if we deſigned to take account of him as a prince, if his ſtate and authority are legal, juſtice ſhould require that we regard thoſe differences only which are adventitious to the man; for in theſe only can it be pretended, that any difference or diſtinction conſiſts. Who indeed can make a king,

" deviliſh." How different the wiſdom that

a king, is ſtill another queſtion. Mr. Godwin ſays, " No au-
" thority is ſo paramount as to make that to be law, which
" abſtract and immutable juſtice had not made to be law pre-
" viouſly to that interpoſition;" and therefore he concludes, that " Legiſlation is not applicable to human ſociety." We ſhall not ſtop to diſcuſs this point: it is enough to know, that in the very ſame page, in which this *legiſlative* authority is queſtioned, a delegated executive authority is admitted; ſo that, for what I can ſee, a king certainly may be made, though abſtract and immutable juſtice ſhall have made no expreſs proviſion for ſuch an appointment. But ſtill ſhould a king be made, it is, it ſeems, *impoſture*. " It muſt be laid down as a firſt
" principle, that monarchy is founded in impoſture. It is falſe,
" that kings are entitled to the eminence they poſſeſs." This is another groſs miſtake or miſrepreſentation, or both; not perhaps as men, but certainly as executive governors! However, " All impoſture is trifling with morality and truth." We grant it; but it is no impoſture to make one man great, though millions continue in a low and mean condition. It might be impoſture to inſiſt upon one man being accounted good, and the reſt vile and wretched. But when Mr. Godwin ſays, that " by
" a monarchical inſtitution the ſtandard of *intellectual merit* is
" no longer the man, but the title," he either ſays what is not the truth, for want of underſtanding the queſtion before him; or underſtanding it properly, he ſays what is not the truth concerning it, which is worſe. The king's title alone is made no ſtandard of *intellectual merit*, in any ſenſe whatever, or under any form whatſoever of monarchical government.

But " *Virtue* is offended by monarchy." How? Why, " the
" firſt leſſon of *virtue* is, Fear no man; the firſt leſſon of mon-
" archy is, Fear the king. The firſt leſſon of *virtue* is, Obey
" no man; the firſt leſſon of monarchy is, Obey the king."

We

is from above: "*That,*" ſays the Apoſtle,

We muſt not miſtake Mr. Godwin's terms: in a marginal note he is conſiderate enough to tell us, that he means to ſpeak of *fortitude* and *puſillanimity*; ſo that *virtue* in the above paſſages is not what an uninformed Engliſhman would ſuſpect, and by which, I think, he might be eaſily miſled, but the Latin "*virtus.*" However, the firſt leſſon, I am certain, of limited monarchy (which is the monarchy we have the happineſs to live under, and which Mr. Godwin includes in his ſtrictures) is ſtrictly conſiſtent with Chriſtianity, morality, and juſtice; Honour the king; *Fear* and *obey* the *laws* he has to adminiſter. But we have not yet done. "Juſtice, truth, and virtue revolt with indignation," ſays Mr. Godwin, "againſt the maxim of our conſtitution, that the "king can do no wrong." Juſtice, truth, and virtue all conſpire to give to a king of this country ſuch a ſecurity. He has no means of doing wrong to any individual, but with the advice and cooperation of his miniſters; and therefore theſe latter are fitly made reſponſible, not for the acts of the king, but for their own concurrence and ſupport. We muſt not venture to defend the maxim as a *fiction* of law or politics; for no doubt the very word fiction will condemn us: but that Mr. Godwin's interpretation of the maxim is in defiance of *common ſenſe*, may I think be ſufficiently ſeen, in a critique which has lately appeared, on a work in which ſuch fictions are particularly objected to: ſee the *Edinburgh Review*, No. vii. Art. 1.

Mr. Godwin concludes with telling us, that ariſtocracy agrees with monarchy in many reſpects, and democracy has alſo its evils. Mr. Godwin prefers the latter; and conſiſtently enough; for he aſſures us, that the thing moſt neceſſary in a government is, "to remove all reſtraints which hold "the mind back from its natural flight." That this is moſt likely to happen in a democracy, at leaſt in the firſt eſtabliſh-

ment

" is firſt pure, then peaceable, full of mercy

ment of a democracy, few, I think, will doubt. But Mr. Godwin in his remarks on *ariſtocracy* notices the origin of its name, and the correſpondent Roman title, " *Optimates*." Really Mr. Godwin would ſeem here to have ſome ground to reſt his arguments on, when he would infer, that the title of dominion was deſigned to be a ſtandard of moral excellence: but though even here there would be a manifeſt fallacy, it ought ſurely to have ſtruck Mr. Godwin, that neither in the Greek title, Βασιλεὺς, nor yet in the Roman *Rex*, nor yet in the Engliſh title of *King*, is there the ſmalleſt alluſion either to moral virtue, or intellectual merit.

But to conclude: *If* all that Mr. Godwin has aſſerted could be ſuppoſed true; *if* monarchy was really the impoſture he pretends; *if* truth and juſtice were ſo much violated, in the ſtate and ſplendour of princes, as that we were taught to think they muſt be good in proportion to their greatneſs, and wiſe in proportion to their ſplendour; what could ſerve to ſtrip the veil off, but the pure and equal laws of Chriſtianity? It has been objected to the Goſpel, that it lays down no rules for the adminiſtration of public affairs, but applies its precepts and its ſanctions to the hearts of individuals *only*. " The ob-
" ſervation," ſays a very learned contemporary of Mr. Godwin's, " is, I grant, defenſible, when properly underſtood. For let it " not be imagined, that magiſtrates, legiſlators, and warriors, " as ſuch, are unconcerned in thoſe precepts here, or in thoſe " ſanctions hereafter: *they* too are individuals; *they* are endowed " with moral faculties; *they* are placed in a ſtate of moral pro-
" bation; *they* are inveſted with privileges which ever muſt be " accompanied by correſpondent and commenſurate duties; " and therefore they ought to remember, that the obſervance " and breach of thoſe duties are ſubjects not only of applauſe " or cenſure from men, but of reward or puniſhment from " God."

" and good fruits, without partiality, and " without hypocriſy[m]."

May it pleaſe God of his infinite mercy to " bring back into the way of truth, all ſuch " as have" ſo " erred, and been ſo" fatally " deceived;" may it pleaſe him to grant, that " his Church, being always preſerved

" God." See *Parr's Faſt Sermon*, 1804. Theſe obſervations are juſt: Chriſtianity affords us a ſecurity againſt the man as well as the monarch; Chriſtianity muſt above all things tend to make the great good, and the mighty virtuous; Chriſtianity muſt peculiarly tend to warn *him*, who *can do no wrong* in the ſight of *man*, that in the ſight of God he is as amenable as the loweſt of his ſubjects, to the ſtricteſt laws of morality, truth, and juſtice. Chriſtianity will teach the prince, that, however he may be raiſed above his fellows in this world, by the outward appendages of ſtate and royalty, nothing will elevate him above the meaneſt of his vaſſals in the world to come, but virtue, and piety, and godlineſs of living. Let us never forget that Chriſtianity, and Chriſtianity alone, ſupplies us with *this mighty protection* againſt all evil rulers, in every deſcription of political government. But let us not forget at the ſame time, that Chriſtianity may *ennoble* the *man*, far beyond all the trappings and ſplendour, and titles and privileges, that diſtinguiſh the monarch: let us not forget, that, if the laws of the ſtate enjoin us to honour the king, the laws of Chriſtianity may oblige us to love the man: let us not forget, with ſuch an example before us, as our own Throne at this moment exhibits, that if it is poſſible for the ſceptred monarch to *dazzle* the *eyes* of his ſlaves and vaſſals, it is not leſs poſſible for the *Chriſtian* king to *intereſt* the *hearts* of millions of faithful ſubjects!

[m] James iii. 15. 27.

" from

" from falſe teachers and falſe apoſtles, may " be ordered and guided by faithful and true " paſtors;" and may he " give to all his " people increaſe of grace, to hear meekly " his word, and to receive it with pure af- " fection, and to bring forth," in the con- duct of their lives, " the" bleſſed " fruits" of his moſt Holy " Spirit."

THE END.

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